POEMS OF PLACES

EDITED BY
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

ASIA

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Poems of Places.

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HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON AND NEW YORK

POEMS OF PLACES

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HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

It is the Soul that sees; the outward eyes
Present the object, but the Mind descries.
CRABBE.

ASIA

VOL. II

ASIA MINOR, MESOPOTAMIA, ARABIA,
TURKESTAN, AFGHANISTAN

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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By HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

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ASIA MINOR.

Abydos.

ABYDOS.

OPPOSING, Sestos and Abydos stood;
Two neighboring cities parted by the flood.
At both, sure-aiming, Cupid fledged the dart;
Here fired a youth's, and there a virgin's heart:
This on Abydos', that on Sestos' shore:
Leander, Hero, were the names they bore.
The lovely youth and maid were known afar,
Each of their native town the beauteous star,
In graces matched: if thither tend your way
Inquire the turret whence the torchlight ray
Ushered the youth, while stood the maiden high;
Or let the surge-reëchoing frith reply
Of old Abydos, that with hollow roar
Shall yet Leander's love and death deplore.

* * *

'T was night; when wintry blasts thick-gathering roar
In darted whirlwind rushing on the shore:
Leander, hopeful of his wonted bride,
Was borne aloft upon the sounding tide.
Wave rolled on wave: in heaps the waters stood;
Sea clashed with air; and, howling o'er the flood,
From every point the warring winds were driven,
And the loud deeps dashed roaring to the heaven.
Leander struggled with the whirlpool main,
And oft to sea-sprung Venus cried in vain,
And him, the godhead of the watery reign.
None succoring hastened to the lover's call,
Nor Love could conquer Fate, though conquering all.
'Gainst his opposing breast, in rushing heaps,
Burst with swift shock the accumulated deeps:
Stiff hung his nerveless feet: his hands, long spread
Restless amidst the waves, dropped numbed and dead:
Sudden the involuntary waters rushed,
And down his gasping throat the brine-floods gushed;
The bitter wind now quenched the light above,
And, so extinguished, fled Leander's life and love.
But while he lingered still, the watchful maid,
With terrors wavering, on the tower delayed.
The morning came, — no husband met her view:
O'er the wide seas her wandering sight she threw:
If haply, since the torch was quenched in shade,
Her bridegroom o'er the waters, devious, strayed.
When, at the turret's foot, her glance described
His rock-torn corse cast upward by the tide,
She rent the broidered robe her breast around,

And headlong from the tower she fell with rushing sound.
Thus on her lifeless husband Hero died,
Nor death's last anguish could their loves divide.

Musæus. Tr. C. A. Elton.

ABYDOS.

I.

THE winds are high on Helle's wave,
As on that night of stormy water,
When Love, who sent, forgot to save
The young, the beautiful, the brave,
The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.
O, when alone along the sky
Her turret-torch was blazing high,
Though rising gale and breaking foam
And shrieking sea-birds warned him home
And clouds aloft and tides below,
With signs and sounds, forbade to go,
He could not see, he would not hear,
Or sound or sign foreboding fear;
His eye but saw that light of love,
The only star it hailed above;
His ear but rang with Hero's song,
"Ye waves, divide not lovers long!"
That tale is old, but love anew
May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

II.

The winds are high, and Helle's tide
Rolls darkly heaving to the main;

And night's descending shadows hide
That field with blood bedewed in vain,
The desert of old Priam's pride;
The tombs, sole relics of his reign,
All, — save immortal dreams that could beguile
The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle!

III.

O yet, — for there my steps have been!
These feet have pressed the sacred shore,
These limbs that buoyant wave hath borne, —
Minstrel! with thee to muse, to mourn,
To trace again those fields of yore,
Believing every hillock green
Contains no fabled hero's ashes,
And that around the undoubted scene
Thine own "broad Hellespont" still dashes,
Be long my lot! and cold were he
Who there could gaze denying thee!

Lord Byron.

Crete (Candia), the Island.

CRETE.

HIPPOLYTA. I was with Hercules, and Cadmus, once,
When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear
With hounds of Sparta: never did I hear

Such gallant chiding; for, besides the groves,
The skies, the fountains, every region near
Seem'd all one mutual cry: I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

THESEUS. My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
So flew'd, so sanded; and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-kneed, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
Each under each. A cry more tunable
Was never halloo'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly:
Judge, when you hear.

William Shakespeare.

CRETE.

ETERNAL powers! what ruins from afar
Mark the fell track of desolating war:
Here arts and commerce with auspicious reign
Once breathed sweet influence on the happy plain:
While o'er the lawn, with dance and festive song,
Young Pleasure led the jocund hours along:
In gay luxuriance Ceres too was seen
To crown the valleys with eternal green:
For wealth, for valor, courted and revered,
What Albion is, fair Candia then appeared.
Ah! who the flight of ages can revoke?
The free-born spirit of her sons is broke,
They bow to Ottoman's imperious yoke.

No longer fame their drooping heart inspires,
For stern oppression quenched its genial fires:
Though still her fields, with golden harvests crowned,
Supply the barren shores of Greece around,
Sharp penury afflicts these wretched isles,
There hope ne'er dawns, and pleasure never smiles;
The vassal wretch contented drags his chain,
And hears his famished babes lament in vain.
These eyes have seen the dull reluctant soil
A seventh year mock the weary laborer's toil.
No blooming Venus, on the desert shore,
Now views with triumph captive gods adore;
No lovely Helens now with fatal charms
Excite the avenging chiefs of Greece to arms;
No fair Penelopes enchant the eye,
For whom contending kings were proud to die;
Here sullen beauty sheds a twilight ray,
While sorrow bids her vernal bloom decay;
Those charms, so long renowned in classic strains,
Had dimly shone on Albion's happier plains!

* * *

The sun's bright orb, declining all serene,
Now glanced obliquely o'er the woodland scene;
Creation smiles around; on every spray
The warbling birds exalt their evening lay;
Blithe skipping o'er yon hill, the fleecy train
Join the deep chorus of the lowing plain;
The golden lime and orange there were seen
On fragrant branches of perpetual green;
The crystal streams that velvet meadows lave,
To the green ocean roll with chiding wave.

The glassy ocean, hushed, forgets to roar,
But trembling murmurs on the sandy shore;
And, lo! his surface lovely to behold,
Glows in the west, a sea of living gold!
While all above a thousand liveries gay
The skies with pomp ineffable array.
Arabian sweets perfume the happy plains;
Above, beneath, around, enchantment reigns!
While glowing Vesper leads the starry train,
And night slow draws her veil o'er land and main,
Emerging clouds the azure east invade,
And wrap the lucid spheres in gradual shade;
While yet the songsters of the vocal grove
With dying numbers tune the soul to love.

William Falconer.

CRETE.

SPERANZA, Speranza! we felt through the night-time
The thrill of thy voice and the joy of thy lyre;
Heard thee far off singing sweet of the bright time
Prophets foretold in their large heart's desire.

Strains floated by in the sad waning moonlight,
While we stood calling thy name from afar.
Come to thy summer bowers, queen of high noonlight,
Full-armed and splendid, — our souls' morning-star!

Come as thou camest when Italy panted
And leapt to her feet, o'er her dukes and her kings.
Come, like the new life America planted
To blossom and yield through her ages of springs.

Come to the spirits benighted, unlettered,
Unbarring the portals of science and love.
Come to the bodies enslaved, tasked, and fettered;
Build up the freedom no tyrant can move.

O, they are grappling for life, — just for breathing;
Hoping naught, asking naught, — only to stand;
Only to stand with their arms interwreathing,
Brotherlike, bound to their own fatherland.

Faintly they hear thee. "Speranza, Speranza!"
They call in the gloom. Are the echoes all dead?
Comes there no voice from Mount Ida in answer?
Shines there no star in the pale morning-red?

Must the fierce ranks of the Ottoman Nero
Trample their life out with barbarous feet?
Is there no god, no Olympian hero,
Left on thy mountains, O desolate Crete?

O, shame on the nations who sent the Crusaders
To wrest from the Turk the dead stones of a tomb,
Yet give a live race to the savage invaders,
And lift not a finger to lighten its gloom!

And shame to proud France, who has opened with greeting
To the red-handed tyrant her welcoming doors;
And shame to old England, that welcome repeating,
That brings the crowned butcher a guest to her shores!

Ah, well! Heaven wills that the selfish should blunder.
The tyrants are deaf, but the people know well

How God in the heavens sits holding the thunder,
That strikes to its centre the kingdom of hell.

For sooner or later — no seer can foreknow it —
Falls the swift bolt, and the thrones are ablaze.
Time yet shall re-echo the lay of the poet,
And Greece shall live over her happiest days.

Christopher Pearse Cranch.

CRETE.

"IN the mid-sea there sits a wasted land,"
Said he thereafterward, "whose name is Crete,
Under whose king the world of old was chaste.
There is a mountain there, that once was glad
With waters and with leaves, which was called Ida;
Now 't is deserted, as a thing worn out.
Rhea once chose it for the faithful cradle
Of her own son; and to conceal him better,
Whene'er he cried, she there had clamors made."

Dante Alighieri. Tr. H. W. Longfellow.

Cydnus, the River.

CLEOPATRA ON THE CYDNUS.

ENOBARBUS. The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water; the poop was beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed that

The winds were lovesick with them: the oars were
silver;
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water, which they beat, to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggared all description: she did lie
In her pavilion (cloth of gold, of tissue)
O'er-picturing that Venus, where we see
The fancy outwork nature: on each side her
Stood pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With diverse-colour'd fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid, did.

AGRIPPA. O, rare for Antony!

ENO. Her gentlewomen, like the Nereids,
So many mermaids, tended her i' the eyes,
And made their bends adornings; at the helm
A seeming mermaid steers; the silken tackle
Smell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense
Of the adjacent wharves. The city cast
Her people out upon her; and Antony,
Enthron'd i' the market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to th' air; which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
And made a gap in nature.

William Shakespeare.

CLEOPATRA.

AFTER DANBY'S PICTURE OF THE EGYPTIAN QUEEN EMBARKING ON THE CYDNUS.

FLUTES in the sunny air!
And harps in the porphyry halls!
And a low, deep hum, like a people's prayer,
With its heart-breathed swells and falls!
And an echo, like the desert's call,
Flung back to the shouting shores!
And the river's ripple, heard through all,
As it plays through the silver oars!
The sky is a gleam of gold!
And the amber breezes float,
Like thoughts to be dreamed of but never told,
Around the dancing boat!

She has stepped on the burning sand!
And the thousand tongues are mute!
And the Syrian strikes, with a trembling hand,
The strings of his gilded lute!
And the Ethiop's heart throbs loud and high,
Beneath his white symar,
And the Lybian kneels, as he meets her eye,
Like the flash of an Eastern star!
The gales may not be heard,
Yet the silken streamers quiver,
And the vessel shoots, like a bright-plumed bird,
Away, down the golden river!

Away by the lofty mount!
And away by the lonely shore!
And away by the gushing of many a fount,
Where fountains gush no more!
O for some warning vision, there,
Some voice that should have spoken
Of climes to be laid waste and bare,
And glad young spirits broken!
Of waters dried away,
And hope and beauty blasted!
That scenes so fair and hearts so gay
Should be so early wasted!

A dream of other days!
That land is a desert now!
And grief grew up to dim the blaze
Upon that royal brow!
The whirlwind's burning wind hath cast
Blight on the marble plain,
And sorrow, like the simoom, past
O'er Cleopatra's brain!
Too like her fervid clime, that bred
Its self-consuming fires,
Her breast, like Indian widows, fed
Its own funereal pyres!
Not such the song her minstrels sing,
"Live, beauteous, and forever!"
As the vessel darts, with its purple wing,
Away, down the golden river!

Thomas Kibble Hervey.

Cyprus, the Island.

SONNET

ON THE SIEGE OF FAMAGUSTA, IN THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS, BY THE TURKS, IN 1571.

THUS saith the Lord: "In whom shall Cyprus trust,
With all her crimes, her luxury, and pride?
In her voluptuous loves will she confide,
Her harlot-daughters, and her queen of lust?
My day is come when o'er her neck in dust
Vengeance and fury shall triumphant ride,
Death and captivity the spoil divide,
And Cyprus perish: I the Lord am just.
Then he that bought, and he that sold in thee,
Thy princely merchants, shall their loss deplore,
Brothers in ruin as in fraud before;
And thou, who madest thy rampart of the sea,
Less by thy foes cast down than crushed by me!
Thou, Famagusta! fall, and rise no more."

James Montgomery.

WINE OF CYPRUS.

GIVEN TO ME BY H. S. BOYD, AUTHOR OF "SELECT PASSAGES FROM THE GREEK FATHERS," ETC., TO WHOM THESE STANZAS ARE ADDRESSED.

IF old Bacchus were the speaker
He would tell you with a sigh,
Of the Cyprus in this beaker
I am sipping like a fly, —
Like a fly or gnat on Ida
At the hour of goblet-pledge,
By queen Juno brushed aside, a
Full white arm-sweep, from the edge.

Sooth, the drinking should be ampler,
When the drink is so divine;
And some deep-mouthed Greek exampler
Would become your Cyprus wine!
Cyclop's mouth might plunge aright in,
While his one eye over-leered, —
Nor too large were mouth of Titan,
Drinking rivers down his beard.

Pan might dip his head so deep in
That his ears alone pricked out,
Fauns around him, pressing, leaping,
Each one pointing to his throat:
While the Naiads like Bacchantes,
Wild, with urns thrown out to waste,

Cry, "O earth, that thou wouldst grant us
Springs to keep, of such a taste!"

But for me, I am not worthy
After gods and Greeks to drink;
And my lips are pale and earthy
To go bathing from this brink.
Since you heard them speak the last time,
They have faded from their blooms,
And the laughter of my pastime
Has learnt silence at the tombs.

Ah, my friend! the antique drinkers
Crowned the cup, and crowned the brow.
Can I answer the old thinkers
In the forms they thought of, now?
Who will fetch from garden-closes
Some new garlands while I speak,
That the forehead, crowned with roses,
May strike scarlet down the cheek?

Do not mock me! with my mortal,
Suits no wreath again, indeed!
I am sad-voiced as the turtle
Which Anacreon used to feed;
Yet as that same bird demurely
Wet her beak in cup of his,—
So, without a garland, surely
I may touch the brim of this.

Go!—let others praise the Chian!—
This is soft as Muses' string,—

This is tawny as Rhea's lion,
  This is rapid as its spring, —
Bright as Paphia's eyes e'er met us,
  Light as ever trod her feet!
And the brown bees of Hymettus
  Make their honey not so sweet.

Very copious are my praises,
  Though I sip it like a fly! —
Ah — but, sipping, — times and places
  Change before me suddenly —
As Ulysses' old libation
  Drew the ghosts from every part,
So your Cyprus wine, dear Grecian,
  Stirs the Hades of my heart.

And I think of those long mornings
  Which my thought goes far to seek,
When, betwixt the folio's turnings,
  Solemn flowed the rhythmic Greek.
Past the pane, the mountain spreading,
  Swept the sheep-bell's tinkling noise,
While a girlish voice was reading, —
  Somewhat low for *αι*'s and *οι*'s.

Then what golden hours were for us! —
  While we sate together there,
While the white vests of the chorus
  Seemed to wave up a live air!
How the cothurns trod majestic
  Down the deep iambic lines;

And the rolling anapæstic
  Curled like vapor over shrines!

O, our Æschylus, the thunderous!
  How he drove the bolted breath
Through the cloud, to wedge it ponderous
  In the gnarled oak beneath.
O, our Sophocles, the royal,
  Who was born to monarch's place, —
And who made the whole world loyal,
  Less by kingly power than grace.

Our Euripides, the human —
  With his droppings of warm tears;
And his touches of things common,
  Till they rose to touch the spheres!
Our Theocritus, our Bion,
  And our Pindar's shining goals! —
These were cup-bearers undying
  Of the wine that 's meant for souls.

And my Plato, the divine one, —
  If men know the gods aright
By their motions as they shine on
  With a glorious trail of light! —
And your noble Christian bishops,
  Who mouthed grandly the last Greek:
Though the sponges on their hyssops
  Were distent with wine — too weak.

Yet, your Chrysostom, you praised him,
  With his liberal mouth of gold;

And your Basil, you upraised him
To the height of speakers old:
And we both praised Heliodorus
For his secret of pure lies;
Who forged first his linked stories
In the heat of lady's eyes.

And we both praised your Synesius
For the fire shot up his odes,
Though the Church was scarce propitious
As he whistled dogs and gods.—
And we both praised Nazianzen
For the fervid heart and speech;
Only I eschewed his glancing
At the lyre hung out of reach.

Do you mind that deed of Até
Which you bound me to so fast,—
Reading "De Virginitate,"
From the first line to the last?
How I said at ending, solemn,
As I turned and looked at you,
That St. Simeon on the column
Had had somewhat less to do?

For we sometimes gently wrangled;
Very gently, be it said,—
Since our thoughts were disentangled
By no breaking of the thread!
And I charged you with extortions
On the nobler fames of old,—

Ay, and sometimes thought your Porsons
  Stained the purple they would fold.

For the rest, — a mystic moaning,
  Kept Cassandra at the gate,
With wild eyes the vision shone in, —
  And wide nostrils scenting fate.
And Prometheus, bound in passion
  By brute Force to the blind stone,
Showed us looks of invocation
  Turned to ocean and the sun.

And Medea we saw burning
  At her nature's planted stake;
And proud Œdipus fate-scorning
  While the cloud came on to break —
While the cloud came on slow — slower,
  Till he stood discrowned, resigned! —
But the reader's voice dropped lower
  When the poet called him blind!

Ah, my gossip! you were older,
  And more learned, and a man! —
Yet that shadow — the enfolder
  Of your quiet eyelids — ran
Both our spirits to one level,
  And I turned from hill and lea
And the summer-sun's green revel, —
  To your eyes that could not see.

Now Christ bless you with the one light
  Which goes shining night and day!

May the flowers which grow in sunlight
  Shed their fragrance in your way!
Is it not right to remember
  All your kindness, friend of mine,
When we two sate in the chamber,
  And the poets poured us wine?

So, to come back to the drinking
  Of this Cyprus, — it is well,
But those memories, to my thinking,
  Make a better œnomel;
And whoever be the speaker,
  None can murmur with a sigh —
That, in drinking from that beaker,
  I am sipping like a fly.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

CLYTÈ.

ON the sea-shore at Cyprus stood
  A little sheltered rustic altar
Where those whom Venus loved could come
  And pious prayers and praises falter.
'T was humble, yet the Golden Age,
  Ere tyrants were, had kept it guarded,
And centuries long that little fane
  A sheltering plane had greenly warded.

Up to its marble steps the waves
Came creeping, courtier-like, in whispers;

The zephyrs spoke among the boughs,
  Like lovers, or like infant lispers;
Dark violets purpled all the turf
  Beneath that plane-tree's soft green shadow,
Nowhere the amaranth grew so fair
  As just within that sea-side meadow.

Phædon, a sculptor, Lemnian born,
  Had toiled for years to deck that altar
With his best art; no lust for gold
  Or bad men's scorn could make him falter;
So he had carved his dead love's face
  As Clytè — praying still in anguish
That for one hour she might return
  From those dark shades where sad souls languish.

"'Tis done!" one eve the sculptor cried,
  And knelt in prayer to Aphroditè.
His dream stood petrified at last,
  That marble nymph, — his gentle Clytè.
The goddess heard him as he knelt,
  And, smiled from rosy clouds, consenting.
The maid was ferried back to earth,
  Pluto for one short hour relenting.

That swelling breast — the lover's pillow —
  Was now of Parian crystal whiteness;
Those Juno arms, that Jove might fold,
  Were of a smooth and radiant lightness;
Her hair in rippling wave on wave
  Crowned a fair head so sweetly mournful;

The eyes were full of tender grief,
The full-lipped mouth was witching scornful.

The room was dark where Phædon knelt,
But as he prayed the moonbeams entered,
And, like a crown of glory pure,
Upon the brow of Clytè centred;
Then down her face they gently stole,
With silver all her raiment sheathing.
His prayer was answered; Phædon cried,
"She lives! she lives! I hear her breathing!"

Like one who, rising from a trance,
Reluctant wakes, and half in sorrow,
Clytè stepped from that pedestal, —
Death had been vanquished till the morrow.
She kissed her lover's burning brow,
Her soft white arms around him lacing;
Venus had sent her from the dead
To soothe him with her sweet embracing.

* * *

But when day dawned and he awoke,
That rainbow-dream had passed forever:
The nymph had turned to stone again,
To wake to life and beauty — never.
With a deep sigh he kissed the lips
Of that sweet nymph, once more reposing:
Then seized his shaping steel and clay,
To toil till life's long day was closing.

He wept not, but, in patience strong,
Thought of the blissful reuniting,

As soldiers do of rest and sleep
After a long day's toilsome fighting;
And in his art content he toiled
To deck that fane of Aphroditè,
And by him, as he labored, stood
His statue of the gentle Clytè.

Walter Thornbury.

CATTERINA CORNARO.

I.

IN Cyprus, where 'live Summer never dies,
Love's native land is. There the seas, the skies,
Are blue and lucid as the looks, the air
Fervid and fragrant as the breath and hair
Of Beauty's Queen; whose gracious godship dwells
In that dear island of delicious dells,
Mid lavish lights and languid glooms divine.
There doth she her sly dainty sceptre twine
With seabank myrtle spray, and roses sweet
And full as, when the lips of lovers meet
The first strange time, their sudden kisses be:
There doth she lightly reign: there holdeth she
Her laughing court in gleam of lemon groves:
The wanton mother of unnumbered Loves!

What earthly creature hath Dame Venus' grace
Dowered so divinely sweet of form and face
As that she may, unshamed in Cupid's smile,
Be sovereign lady of this lovely isle?

Sure, Venus, not so blind as some aver
Was thy bold boy, what time, in search of her
Thou bad'st him seek, he roamed the seas all round,
And barbarous lands beyond; since he hath found
This wonder out; whose perfect sweetness seems
The fair fulfilment of his own fond dreams:
And Kate Cornaro is the Island Queen.

II.

A Queen, a child, fair, happy, scarce nineteen!
In whose white hands her little sceptre lies,
Like a new-gathered floweret, in surprise
At being there. To keep her what she is, —
A thing too rare for the familiar kiss
Of household loves, — wifehood and motherhood, —
Fit only to be delicately wooed
With wooings fine and frolicsome as those
Wherewith the sweet West wooes a small blush-rose,
Her husband first, and then her babe, away
Slipped from her sight, each on a summer day,
Ere she could miss them, into the soft shade
Of flowery graves. She doth not feel afraid
To be alone. Because she hath her toy,
Her pretty kingdom. And it is her joy
To dandle the doll-people, and be kind
And careful to it, as a child. Each wind
O' the world on her smooth eyelids lightly breathes,
As morn upon a lily whence frail wreaths
Of little dew-drops hang, easily troubled,
As such things are. The June sun's joy is doubled,

Shining through shadow in her golden hair.
Light-wedded, and light-widowed, and unaware
Of any sort of sorrow doth she seem;
Albeit the times are stormy, and do teem
With tumult round her tiny throne. Primrose,
Pert violet, hardy vetch, — no blossom blows
In March less conscious of a cloudy sky,
More sweet in sullen season. Days go by
Daintily round her. If her crown's light weight
Upon her forehead fair and delicate
Leave the least violet stain, when laid away
At close of some great summer holiday,
Her lovers kiss the sweet mark smooth and white
Ere it can pain her. She hath great delight
In little things: and of great things small care.
The people love her; though the nobles are
Wayward and wild. Yet fears she not, nor shrinks
To show she fears not. "For in truth," she thinks
"My Uncle Andrew and my Uncle Mark
Have care of me." And, truly, dawn or dark,
These Uncles Mark and Andrew, busiest two
In Cyprus, find no lack of work to do:
Go up and down the noisy little state,
Silent all day: and, when the night is late,
Write letters, which she does not care to read
(The Ten, she knows, will ponder them with heed),
To Venice — not so far from Cyprus' shore
But what the shadow of St. Mark goes o'er
The narrow sea to touch her island throne.

III.

She is herself a dove from Venice flown
Not so long since but what her snowy breast
Is yet scarce warm within its new-found nest, —
Whence sings she o'er the grave of Giacomo
Songs taught her by St. Mark.

Cristofero
(He of the four stone shields which you may spy,
Thrice striped, thrice spotted with the mulberry,
In the great sunlight o'er that famous stair
Whose marble white is warmed with rose-hues, where
The crownings were once) wore the ducal horn
In Venice, on that joyous July morn
When all along the liquid streets, paved red
With rich reflections of clear crimson spread,
Or gorgeous orange gay with glowing fringe,
From bustling balconies above, to tinge
The lucid highways with new lustres, best
Befitting that day's pride, the blithe folk pressed
About St. Paul's, beneath the palace door
Of Mark Cornaro; where the Bucentor
Was waiting with the Doge; to see Queen Kate
Come smiling in her robes of marriage state
Through the crammed causeway, glimmering down between
The sloped bright-banded poles, beneath the green
Sea-weeded walls; content to catch quick gleams
Of her robe's tissue stiff with strong gold seams
From throat to foot, or mantle's sweeping shine

Of murrey satin lined with ermine fine.
Flushing the white warmth it encircled glad,
A sparkling carcanet of gems she had
About her fair throat. Such strong splendors piled
So heavily upon so slight a child
Made Venice proud: because in little things
Her greatness thus seemed greatest.

His white wings
The galley put forth from the blue lagoon.
The mellow disk of a mild daylight moon
Was hanging wan in the warm azure air,
When the great clarions all began to blare
Farewell. And, underneath a cloudless sky
Over a calméd sea, with minstrelsy,
The baby Queen to Cyprus sailed.

Robert, Lord Lytton.

Ephesus (Ayasoolook).

THE SEVEN SLEEPERS OF EPHESUS.

SIX young men of Cæsar's household
Fled before their master's anger;
As a god he claimed their worship,
Though a sorry god was he.
For an insect, ever buzzing,
Still annoyed him at the banquet,
Still disturbed his rest and pleasure.

All the chasing of his servants
Could not drive away the torment.
Ever round the head of Cæsar
Did the angry creature hover,
Threatening with its poisoned sting:
Still it flew, and swiftly circling
Made confusion at the table,
Messenger of Baalzebub,
The infernal Lord of flies.

"Ha!" — so spake the youths together, —
"He a god that fears an insect!
Can a god be thus molested?
Does a god, like wretched mortals,
Feast and revel at the banquet?
Nay! to Him, the one, the only,
Who the sun and moon created,
Who hath made the stars in glory,
Shall we henceforth bend the knee!"

So they spake, and left the palace,
Left it in their trim apparel;
By a shepherd led, they hastened
To a cave was in the mountain,
And they all went gliding in.
And the shepherd's dog came after,
Though they strove to drive him from them;
Thrust himself toward his master,
Licked their hands in dumb entreaty,
That he might remain their fellow;
And lay down with them to sleep.

But the wrath of Cæsar kindled,
When he knew that they had left him;
All his former love departed,
All his thought was vengeance only.
Out in quest he sent his people,
Traced them to the mountain-hollow.
Not to fire nor sword he doomed them;
But he bade great stones be lifted
To the entrance of the cavern;
Saw it fastened up with mortar;
And so left them in their tomb.

But the youths lay calmly sleeping;
And the angel, their protector,
Spake before the throne of glory:
"I have watched beside the sleepers,
Made them turn in slumber ever,
That the damps of yonder cavern
Should not cramp their youthful limbs;
And the rocks around I 've opened,
That the sun at rising, setting,
May give freshness to their cheeks.
So they lie in rest and quiet,
In the bliss of happy dreams."
So they lay; and still, beside them,
Lay the dog in peaceful slumber,
Never whimpering in his sleep.

Years came on, and years departed;
Till at last the young men wakened;
And the wall, so strongly fastened,

Now had fallen into ruin,
Crumbled by the touch of ages.
Then Iamblichus, the youngest,
And the goodliest of them all,
Seeing that the shepherd trembled,
Said, "I pray you now, my brothers,
Let me go to seek provision;
I have gold, my life I 'll venture,
Tarry till I bring you bread."
Ephesus, that noble city,
Then, for many a year, had yielded
To the faith of the Redeemer,
Jesus. (Glory to his name!)

And he ran unto the city;
At the gate were many warders.
Arméd men on tower and turret,
But he passed them all unchallenged;
To the nearest baker's went he,
And in haste demanded bread.

"Ha! young rogue," exclaimed the baker,
"Surely thou hast found a treasure;
That old piece of gold betrays thee!
Give me, or I shall denounce thee,
Half the treasure thou hast found."

And Iamblichus denied it;
But the baker would not listen,
Brawling till the watch came forward.
To the king they both were taken;

And the monarch, like the baker,
But a higher right asserting,
Claimed to share the treasure too.

But at last the wondrous story,
Which the young man told the monarch,
Proved itself by many tokens.
Lord was he of that same palace,
Whither he was brought for judgment;
For he showed to them a pillar,
In the which a stone when loosened
Led unto a treasure chamber,
Heaped with gold and costly jewels.
Straightway came in haste his kindred,
All his clan came thronging round him,
Eager to advance their claim;
Each was nearer than the other.
And Iamblichus, the blooming,
Young in face and form and feature,
Stood an ancestor among them.
All bewildered heard he legends
Of his son and of his grandsons,
Fathers of the men before him.
So amazed he stood and listened,
Patriarch in his early manhood;
While the crowd around him gathered,
Stalwart men, and mighty captains,
Him, the youngest, to acknowledge
As the founder of their race!
And one token with another
Made assurance doubly certain;

None could doubt the wondrous story
Of himself and of his comrades.

Shortly, to the cave returning,
King and people all go with him,
And they saw him enter in.
But no more to king or people
Did the Chosen reappear.
For the seven, who long had tarried, —
Nay, but they were Eight in number,
For the faithful dog was with them, —
Thenceforth from the world were sundered.
The most blessed angel Gabriel,
By the will of God Almighty,
Walling up the cave forever,
Led them unto Paradise.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Tr. W. E. Aytoun.

EPHESUS.

AND where stands Ephesus, in days gone by
Pride of the East, Ionia's radiant eye,
Boasting the shrine to famed Diana reared,
Earth's wonder called, that myriad hearts revered?
There spreads Selinus' lake beneath the hill,
And flows unchanged the Cayster's willowed rill;
These speak the city near, — through waving grass,
O'er blackened stones, we slowly laboring pass;
Across our way the timid leveret springs;
Woke from his sleep, the snake uncoils his rings.

No street we tread, but climb a grass-grown mound,—
What! is this Ephesus that moulders round?
The embattled walls that swept o'er Lepre's side,
To shapeless ruin crushed, have stooped their pride:
Where stood that early church Paul loved so well,
No cross, no tomb, no stone remains to tell.
Diana's fane that, glassed in depths below,
From bronze and silver cast a starry glow,
With statues, colonnades, and courts apart,
And porphyry pillars, each the pride of art,—
Have Time's stern scythe, man's rage, and flood and fire,
Left naught for curious pilgrims to admire?
A few poor footsteps now may cross the shrine,
Cell, long arcade, high altar, all supine;
Bound with thick ivy, broken columns lie,
Through low rent arches winds of evening sigh,
Rough brambles choke the vaults where gold was stored,
And toads spit venom forth where priests adored.

The shivering bolt of ruthless ruin falls
On pleasure's haunts, as well as priestly walls:
See! in the circus, where gay chariots pressed
Their rapid race, the plover builds her nest.
Ten thousand voices rang from yonder hill,
There, clothed with moss, sweep circling benches still,
But e'en the peasant shuns that spot in fear,
So deep the voiceless calm, its look so drear.
Poor actors! Greek or Roman, where are they,
That toiled and laughed to make their fellows gay?
Down the long stream of sable Lethe tost,
Their graves unknown, and e'en their memories lost.

Yet, Ephesus! while desolate and lorn,
And though thy starless night shall know no morn,
Cold is the breast of him who looks on thee,
And feels no thrill of solemn ecstasy.
As musing now we walk thy desert bound,
The heart leaps up as at a trumpet's sound,
For here, e'en here, — name never to expire, —
Paul taught his church, and breathed his words of fire;
These very stones his foot perchance hath trod,
These roofless walls have heard his prayers to God.
There did Demetrius raise his heathen cry
'Gainst him who led men's wandering thoughts on high,
Showed the dark errors of their baseless dreams,
Poured on the spirit's night celestial beams,
And cheered us with the hope, when worms shall prey
On this poor form consigned to slow decay,
The soul, with added powers and new-fledged plume,
Shall spring to life and joy, beyond the tomb.

Ay, Paul's bright fame, above the fame of kings,
On these sad ruins dazzling lustre flings.
But chief tradition points to yon rude tower,
Where passed in bonds the apostle's lonely hour,
And pious hands have reared in later day
These fretted Gothic walls, and arches gray:
Within this cell — hush, heart! thy fluttering fears —
To Fancy's eye his godlike form appears:
What solemn thought that lofty brow displays!
What holy fervor in that lifted gaze!
Monarchs! behold a greater far than ye;
Conquerors! to Christ's brave champion bend the knee!

Nicholas Michell.

Eurymedon, the River.

ON THOSE WHO FELL AT EURYMEDON.

THESE by the streams of famed Eurymedon
Their short but brilliant race of life have run;
In winged ships and on the embattled field
Alike, they forced the Median bows to yield,
Breaking their foremost ranks. Now here they lie,
Their names inscribed on rolls of victory.

Simonides. Tr. J. H. Merivale.

Ida, the Mountain.

ŒNONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapor slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
The lawns and meadow ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
The long brook falling through the cloven ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Garfiarus

Stands up and takes the morning; but in front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's columned citadel,
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
Mournful Œnone, wandering forlorn
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck
Floated her hair or seemed to float in rest.
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill:
The grasshopper is silent in the grass:
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the cicala sleeps.
The purple flowers droop; the golden bee
Is lily-cradled: I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves,
That house the cold crowned snake! O mountain
brooks,

I am the daughter of a River-God;
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,
A cloud that gathered shape: for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain-pine:
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
Leading a jet-black goat white-horned, white-hoofed,
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far off the torrent called me from the cleft:
Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes,
I sat alone: white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin
Drooped from his shoulder, but his sunny hair
Clustered about his temples like a god's;
And his cheek brightened as the foam-bow brightens
When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm

Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
That smelt ambrosially, and while I looked
And listened, the full-flowing river of speech
Came down upon my heart.

"'My own Œnone,
Beautiful-browed Œnone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind engraven
"For the most fair," would seem to award it thine.
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added, 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom 't were due.
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
It was the deep midnoon: one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piny sides

Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower through and through.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flowed a golden cloud, and leaned
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom
Coming through Heaven, like a light that grows
Larger and clearer, with one mind the gods
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestioned, overflowing revenue
Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many a vale
And river-sundered champaign clothed with corn,
Or labored mines, undrainable of ore.
Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,
From many an inland town and haven large,
Mast-thronged beneath her shadowing citadel
In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Still she spake on, and still she spake of power,
'Which in all action is the end of all;

Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
And throned of wisdom, — from all neighbor crowns
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,
From me, heaven's queen, Paris, to thee king-born,
A shepherd all thy life, but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power
Only, are likest gods, who have attained
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, with undying bliss,
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
Out at arm's length, so much the thought of power
Flattered his spirit; but Pallas where she stood
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her full and earnest eye
Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek
Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
Yet not for power, (power of herself
Would come uncalled for,) but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear;
And because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Again she said: 'I woo thee not with gifts.
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,
If gazing on divinity disrobed,
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
Unbiased by self-profit, O, rest thee sure
That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a god's,
To push thee forward through a life of shocks,
Dangers and deeds, until endurance grow
Sinewed with action, and the full-grown will,
Circled through all experiences, pure law,
Commeasure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceased,
And Paris pondered, and I cried, 'O Paris,
Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not,
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,
With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And shoulder: from the violets her light foot

Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form
Between the shadows of the vine bunches
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh,
Half whispered in his ear, 'I promise thee
The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.'
She spoke and laughed: I shut my sight for fear:
But when I looked, Paris had raised his arm,
And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the bower;
And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die."

* * *

Alfred Tennyson.

MOUNT IDA.

NOW twilight gently hovers o'er the deep.
The winds are hushed; becalmed the isleman's bark
Shows its white pinions on the increasing dark,
And mournfully at foot of yonder steep
The dying surf rolls up the lonely shore.
Lo! heaving hoary-headed to the sky,
In stern but venerable majesty,
Mount Ida distant stands. There, times of yore,
The shepherd prince his pastoral syrinx played;

And there did lofty walls and turrets gleam
(Whose very memory seemeth like a dream)
That stood coeval with Achilles' shade.
O, since the Cyclades with beacons shone,
What ages have bewailed for Troy o'erthrown!

Seymour Green Wheeler Benjamin.

Karaman.

THE KARAMANIAN EXILE.

I SEE thee ever in my dreams,
Karaman,
Thy hundred hills, thy thousand streams,
Karaman! O Karaman
As when thy gold-bright morning gleams,
As when the deepening sunset seams
With lines of light thy hills and streams,
Karaman!
So thou loomest on my dreams,
Karaman! O Karaman!

The hot, bright plains, the sun, the skies,
Karaman!
Seem death-black marbles to mine eyes,
Karaman! O Karaman!
I turn from summer blood and dyes;
Yet in my dreams thou dost arise

In welcome glory to my eyes,
Karaman!
In thee my life of life yet lies,
Karaman!
Thou still art holy in mine eyes,
Karaman! O Karaman!

Ere my fighting years were come,
Karaman!
Troops were few in Erzeroum,
Karaman! O Karaman!
Their fiercest came from Erzeroum,
They came from Ukhbar's palace dome,
They dragged me forth from thee, my home,
Karaman!
Thee, my own, my mountain home,
Karaman!
In life and death, my spirit's home,
Karaman! O Karaman!
O, none of all my sisters ten,
Karaman!
Loved like me my fellow-men,
Karaman! O Karaman!
I was mild as milk till then,
I was soft as silk till then;
Now my breast is as a den,
Karaman!
Foul with blood and bones of men,
Karaman!
With blood and bones of slaughtered men,
Karaman! O Karaman!

My boyhood's feelings newly born,
Karaman!
With life's young flowers were all uptorn,
Karaman! O Karaman!
And in their stead sprang weed and thorn;
What once I loved now moves my scorn;
My burning eyes are dried to horn,
Karaman!
I hate the blessed light of morn,
Karaman! O Karaman!

The Spahi wears a tyrant's chains,
Karaman!
But bondage worse than this remains,
Karaman! O Karaman!
My heart is black with million stains:
Thereon, as on Kaf's blasted plains,
Shall nevermore fall dews and rains,
Karaman!
Save poison-dews and bloody rains,
Karaman!
Hell's poison-dews and bloody rains,
Karaman! O Karaman!

But life, at worst, must end erelong,
Karaman!
Azreel avengeth every wrong,
Karaman! O Karaman!
Of late my thoughts rove more among
Thy fields; o'ershadowing fancies throng
My mind, and text of bodeful song,
Karaman!

Azreel is terrible and strong,
Karaman!
His lightning sword smites all erelong,
Karaman! O Karaman!

There 's care to-night in Ukhbar's halls,
Karaman!
There 's hope, too, for his trodden thralls,
Karaman! O Karaman!
What lights flash red along yon walls?
Hark! Hark! The muster-trumpet calls!
I see the sheen of spears and shawls,
Karaman!
The foe! The foe! They scale the walls,
Karaman!
To-night Muràd or Ukhbar falls,
Karaman! O Karaman!

James Clarence Mangan.

Latmos, the Mountain.

MOUNT LATMOS.

UPON the sides of Latmos was outspread
A mighty forest; for the moist earth fed
So plenteously all weed-hidden roots
Into o'erhanging boughs and precious fruits.
And it had gloomy shades, sequestered deep,

Where no man went; and if from shepherd's keep
A lamb strayed far adown those inmost glens,
Never again saw he the happy pens
Whither his brethren, bleating with content,
Over the hills at every nightfall went.
Among the shepherds 't was believéd ever,
That not one fleecy lamb which thus did sever
From the white flock, but passed unworried
By any wolf, or pard with prying head,
Until it came to some unfooted plains
Where fed the herds of Pan: ay, great his gains
Who thus one lamb did lose. Paths there were many,
Winding through palmy fern, and rushes fenny,
And ivy banks; all leading pleasantly
To a wide lawn, whence one could only see
Stems thronging all around between the swell
Of turf and slanting branches: who could tell
The freshness of the space of heaven above,
Edged round with dark tree-tops? through which a dove
Would often beat its wings, and often too
A little cloud would move across the blue.

John Keats.

THE AWAKENING OF ENDYMION.

LONE upon a mountain, the pine-trees wailing round him,
Lone upon a mountain the Grecian youth is laid;
Sleep, mystic sleep, for many a year has bound him,

Yet his beauty, like a statue's, pale and fair, is undecayed.
When will he awaken?

When will he awaken? a loud voice hath been crying
Night after night, and the cry has been in vain;
Winds, woods, and waves found echoes for replying,
But the tones of the beloved ones were never heard again.
When will he awaken?
Asked the midnight's silver queen.

Never mortal eye has looked upon his sleeping;
Parents, kindred, comrades, have mourned for him as dead;
By day the gathered clouds have had him in their keeping,
And at night the solemn shadows round his rest are shed.
When will he awaken?

Long has been the cry of faithful Love's imploring;
Long has Hope been watching with soft eyes fixed above;
When will the Fates, the life of life restoring,
Own themselves vanquished by much-enduring Love?
When will he awaken?
Asks the midnight's weary queen.

Beautiful the sleep that she has watched untiring,
Lighted up with visions from yonder radiant sky,

Full of an immortal's glorious inspiring,
Softened by a woman's meek and loving sigh.
When will he awaken?

He has been dreaming of old heroic stories,
And the poet's world has entered in his soul;
He has grown conscious of life's ancestral glories,
When sages and when kings first upheld the mind's control.
When will he awaken?
Asks the midnight's stately queen.

Lo, the appointed midnight! the present hour is fated!
It is Endymion's planet that rises on the air;
How long, how tenderly his goddess Love has waited,
Waited with a love too mighty for despair!
Soon he will awaken.

Soft amid the pines is a sound as if of singing,
Tones that seem the lute's from the breathing flowers depart;
Not a wind that wanders o'er Mount Latmos but is bringing
Music that is murmured from Nature's inmost heart.
Soon he will awaken
To his and midnight's queen!

Lovely is the green earth, — she knows the hour is holy;
Starry are the heavens, lit with eternal joy;

Light like their own is dawning sweet and slowly
O'er the fair and sculptured forehead of that yet
dreaming boy.
Soon he will awaken!

Red as the red rose towards the morning turning,
Warms the youth's lip to the watcher's near his own;
While the dark eyes open, bright, intense, and burning
With a life more glorious than, ere they closed, was
known.
Yes, he has awakened
For the midnight's happy queen!

What is this old history, but a lesson given,
How true love still conquers by the deep strength
of truth, —
How all the impulses, whose native home is heaven,
Sanctify the visions of hope and faith and youth?
'T is for such they waken!

When every worldly thought is utterly forsaken,
Comes the starry midnight, felt by life's gifted few;
Then will the spirit from its earthly sleep awaken
To a being more intense, more spiritual, and true.
So doth the soul awaken,
Like that youth to night's fair queen!

Letitia Elizabeth Landon.

Miletus.

CATULLIAN HENDECASYLLABLES.

HEAR, my beloved, an old Milesian story!—
High, and embosomed in congregated laurels,
Glimmered a temple upon a breezy headland;
In the dim distance amid the skyey billows
Rose a fair island; the god of flocks had placed it.
From the far shores of the bleak resounding island
Oft by the moonlight a little boat came floating,
Came to the sea-cave beneath the breezy headland,
Where amid myrtles a pathway stole in mazes
Up to the groves of the high embosomed temple.
There in a thicket of dedicated roses,
Oft did a priestess, as lovely as a vision,
Pouring her soul to the son of Cytherea,
Pray him to hover around the slight canoe-boat,
And with invisible pilotage to guide it
Over the dusk wave, until the nightly sailor
Shivering with ecstasy sank upon her bosom.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

ODE TO MILETOS.

MAIDEN there was whom Jove
Illuded into love,
Happy and pure was she;
Glorious from her the shore became,

And Helle lifted up her name
To shine eternal o'er the river-sea.

And many tears are shed
Upon thy bridal-bed,
Star of the swimmer in the lonely night!
Who with unbraided hair
Wipedst a breast so fair,
Bounding with toil, more bounding with delight.

But they whose prow hath past thy straits
And, ranged before Byzantion's gates,
Bring to the God of sea the victim due,
Even from the altar raise their eyes,
And drop the chalice with surprise,
And at such grandeur have forgotten you.

At last there swells the hymn of praise,
And who inspires those sacred lays?
"The founder of the walls ye see."
What human power could elevate
Those walls, that citadel, that gate?
"Miletos, O my sons! was he."

Hail then, Miletos! hail, beloved town,
Parent of me and mine!
But let not power alone be thy renown,
Nor chiefs of ancient line.

Nor visits of the Gods, unless
They leave their thoughts below,

And teach us that we most should bless
Those to whom most we owe.

Restless is Wealth; the nerves of Power
Sink, as a lute's in rain:
The Gods lend only for an hour
And then call back again

All else than Wisdom; she alone,
In Truth's or Virtue's form,
Descending from the starry throne
Through radiance and through storm,

Remains as long as godlike men
Afford her audience meet,
Nor Time nor War tread down agen
The traces of her feet.

Alway hast thou, Miletos, been the friend,
Protector, guardian, father, of the wise;
Therefor shall thy dominion never end
Till Fame, despoiled of voice and pinion, dies.

With favoring shouts and flowers thrown fast behind,
Arctinos ran his race,
No wanderer he, alone and blind—
And Melesander was untorn by Thrace.

There have been, but not here,
Rich men who swept aside the royal feast
On child's or bondman's breast,
Bidding the wise and aged disappear.

Revere the aged and the wise,
Aspasia! but thy sandal is not worn
To trample on these things of scorn;
By his own sting the fire-bound scorpion dies.

Walter Savage Landor.

Rhodes, the Island.

THE SONG OF THE SWALLOW.

At Rhodes children greeted the swallow, as herald of the spring, in a little song. Troops of them, carrying about a swallow, sang this from door to door, collecting provisions in return.

THE swallow is come!
The swallow is come!
O, fair are the seasons, and light
Are the days, that she brings
With her dusky wings,
And her bosom snowy white.
And wilt thou not dole
From the wealth that is thine,
The fig and the bowl
Of rosy wine,
And the wheaten meal, and the basket of cheese,
And the omelet cake, which is known to please
The swallow, that comes to the Rhodian land?
Say, must we be gone with an empty hand,
Or shall we receive
The gift that we crave?

If thou give, it is well;
But beware, if thou fail,
Nor hope that we 'll leave thee,
Of all we 'll bereave thee.
We 'll bear off the door,
Or its posts from the floor,
Or we 'll seize thy young wife who is sitting within,
Whose form is so airy, so light, and so thin,
And as lightly, be sure, will we bear her away.
Then look that thy gift be ample to-day,
And open the door, open the door,
To the swallow open the door!
No graybeards are we
To be foiled in our glee,
But boys, who will have our will
This day,
But boys, who will have our will.

From the Greek. Tr. Anonymous.

PROTOGENES AND APELLES.

WHEN poets wrote and painters drew,
As nature pointed out the view;
Ere Gothic forms were known in Greece,
To spoil the well-proportioned piece;
And in our verse ere monkish rhymes
Had jangled their fantastic chimes;
Ere on the flowery lands of Rhodes,
Those knights had fixed their dull abodes,
Who knew not much to paint or write,

Nor cared to pray, nor dared to fight, —
Protogenes, historians note,
Lived there, a burgess, scot and lot;
And, as old Pliny's writings show,
Apelles did the same at Co.
Agreed these points of time and place,
Proceed we in the present case.
Piqued by Protogenes's fame,
From Co to Rhodes Apelles came,
To see a rival and a friend,
Prepared to censure or commend;
Here to absolve and there object,
As art with candor might direct.
He sails, he lands, he comes, he rings,
His servants follow with the things:
Appears the governante of the house,
For such in Greece were much in use;
If young or handsome, yea or no,
Concerns not me or thee to know.
"Does Squire Protogenes live here?"
"Yes, sir," says she, with gracious air
And courtesy low, "but just called out
By lords peculiarly devout,
Who came on purpose, sir, to borrow
Our Venus for the feast to-morrow,
To grace the church; 't is Venus' day:
I hope, sir, you intend to stay
To see our Venus? 't is the piece
The most renowned throughout all Greece;
So like the original, they say:
But I have no great skill that way.

But, sir, at six ('t is now past three)
Dromo must make my master's tea:
At six, sir, if you please to come,
You 'll find my master, sir, at home."
Tea, says a critic big with laughter,
Was found some twenty ages after;
Authors, before they write, should read.
'T is very true; but we 'll proceed.
"And, sir, at present would you please
To leave your name." "Fair maiden, yes.
Reach me that board." No sooner spoke
But done. With one judicious stroke
On the plain ground Apelles drew
A circle regularly true:
"And will you please, sweetheart," said he,
"To show your master this from me?
By it he presently will know
How painters write their names at Co."
He gave the panel to the maid.
Smiling and courtesying, "Sir," she said,
"I shall not fail to tell my master;
And, sir, for fear of all disaster,
I 'll keep it my own self: safe bind,
Says the old proverb, and safe find.
So, sir, as sure as key or lock, —
Your servant, sir, — at six o'clock."
Again at six Apelles came,
Found the same prating civil dame.
"Sir, that my master has been here,
Will by the board itself appear.
If from the perfect line be found

He has presumed to swell the round,
Or colors on the draught to lay,
'T is thus (he ordered me to say),
Thus write the painters of this isle;
Let those of Co remark the style."

She said, and to his hand restored
The rival pledge, the missive board.
Upon the happy line were laid
Such obvious light and easy shade,
The Paris' apple stood confessed,
Or Leda's egg, or Chloe's breast.
Apelles viewed the finished piece;
"And live," said he, "the arts of Greece!
Howe'er Protogenes and I
May in our rival talents vie:
Howe'er our works may have expressed
Who truest drew, or colored best,
When he beheld my flowing line,
He found at least I could design:
And from his artful round, I grant,
That he with perfect skill can paint."

Matthew Prior.

THE TURKISH LADY.

'T WAS the hour when rites unholy
Called each Paynim voice to prayer,
And the star that faded slowly
Left to dews the freshened air.

Day her sultry fires had wasted,
Calm and sweet the moonlight rose;

Even a captive's spirit tasted
Half oblivion of his woes.

Then 't was from an Emir's palace
Came an Eastern lady bright;
She, in spite of tyrants jealous,
Saw and loved an English knight.

"Tell me, captive, why in anguish
Foes have dragged thee here to dwell,
Where poor Christians as they languish
Hear no sound of Sabbath bell?"

"'T was on Transylvania's Bannat
When the crescent shone afar,
Like a pale disastrous planet
O'er the purple tide of war.

"In that day of desolation,
Lady, I was captive made:
Bleeding for my Christian nation
By the walls of high Belgrade."

"Captive! could the brightest jewel
From my turban set thee free?"
"Lady, no! the gift were cruel,
Ransomed, yet if reft of thee.

"Say, fair princess! would it grieve thee
Christian climes should we behold?"
"Nay, bold knight! I would not leave thee
Were thy ransom paid in gold!"

Now in heaven's blue expansion
Rose the midnight star to view,
When to quit her father's mansion,
Thrice she wept and bade adieu!

"Fly we then, while none discover;
Tyrant barks, in vain we ride!"
Soon at Rhodes the British lover
Clasped his blooming Eastern bride.

Thomas Campbell.

Sardis (Sart).

THE GHOST OF CÆSAR.

Re-enter LUCIUS, *with the Gown.*

BRUTUS. Give me the gown. Where is thy instrument?

LUCIUS. Here in the tent.

BRU. What! thou speak'st drowsily?
Poor knave, I blame thee not; thou art o'erwatch'd.
Call Claudius and some other of my men;
I 'll have them sleep on cushions in my tent.

LUC. Varro, and Claudius!

Enter VARRO *and* CLAUDIUS.

VAR. Calls my lord?

BRU. I pray you, sirs, lie in my tent, and sleep:
It may be, I shall raise you by and by
On business to my brother Cassius.

VAR. So please you, we will stand, and watch your pleasure.

BRU. I will not have it so; lie down, good sirs:
It may be, I shall otherwise bethink me.
Look, Lucius, here 's the book I sought for so:
I put it in the pocket of my gown. (*Servants lie down.*)
LUC. I was sure, your lordship did not give it me.
BRU. Bear with me, good boy, I am much forgetful.
Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
And touch thy instrument a strain or two?
LUC. Ay, my lord, an 't please you.
BRU. It does, my boy.
I trouble thee too much, but thou art willing.
LUC. It is my duty, sir.
BRU. I should not urge thy duty past thy might:
I know, young bloods look for a time of rest.
LUC. I have slept, my lord, already.
BRU. It is well done; and thou shalt sleep again;
I will not hold thee long: if I do live,
I will be good to thee. (*Music, and a Song.*)
This is a sleepy tune. — O, murderous slumber!
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
That plays thee music? — Gentle knave, good night!
I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee.
If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument:
I 'll take it from thee; and, good boy, good night.
Let me see, let me see: is not the leaf turn'd down,
Where I left reading? Here it is, I think. (*Sits down.*)

Enter the Ghost of CÆSAR.

How ill this taper burns! Ha! who comes here?
I think it is the weakness of mine eyes,
That shapes this monstrous apparition.
It comes upon me. — Art thou any thing?
Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,

That mak'st my blood cold, and my hair to stare?
Speak to me what thou art.

GHOST. Thy evil spirit, Brutus.

BRU. Why com'st thou?

GHOST. To tell thee thou shalt see me at Philippi.

BRU. Well; then I shall see thee again?

GHOST. Ay, at Philippi. (*Vanishes.*)

BRU. Why, I will see thee at Philippi, then.
Now I have taken heart, thou vanishest:
Ill spirit, I would hold more talk with thee.

William Shakespeare.

BRUTUS IN HIS TENT.

ON wall-girt Sardis weary day hath shed
The golden blaze of his expiring beam;
And ring her paven walks beneath the tread
Of guards that near the hour of battle deem, —
Whose brazen helmets in the starlight gleam;
From tented lines no murmur loud ascends,
For martial thousands of the battle dream
On which the fate of bleeding Rome depends
When blushing dawn awakes, and night's dark curtain rends.

Though hushed war's couchant tigers in their lair,
The tranquil time to one brings not repose, —
A voice was whispering to his soul, "Despair!
The gods will give the triumph to thy foes."
Can sleep, with leaden hand, our eyelids close
When throng distempered fancies and depart,
And thought a shadow on the future throws?

When shapes unearthly into being start,
And, like a snake, Remorse uncoils within the heart?

At midnight deep when bards avow that tombs
Are by their cold inhabitants forsaken,
The Roman chief his wasted lamp relumes,
And calmly reads by mortal woe unshaken:
His iron frame of rest had not partaken,
And doubt — dark enemy of slumber — fills
A breast where fear no trembling chord could waken,
And on his ear an awful voice yet thrills,
That rose, when Cæsar fell, from Rome's old Seven Hills.

A sound, — "that earth owns not," — he hears, and starts,
And grasps the handle of his weapon tried;
Then, while the rustling tent-cloth slowly parts,
A figure enters and stands by his side:
There was an air of majesty and pride
In the bold bearing of that spectre pale, —
The crimson on its robe was still undried,
And dagger-wounds, that tell a bloody tale
Beyond the power of words, the opening folds unveil.

With fearful meaning towers the phantom grim,
On Brutus fixing its cold, beamless eye;
The face, though that of Julius, seems to him
Formed from the moonlight of a misty sky:
The birds of night, affrighted, flutter by,
And a wild sound upon the shuddering air
Creeps as if earth were breathing out a sigh,
And the fast-waning lamp, as if aware
Some awful shade was nigh, emits a ghostly glare.

Stern Brutus quails not, though his woe-worn cheeks
Blanch with emotion, and in tone full loud
Thus to the ghastly apparition speaks, —
"Why stand before me in that gory shroud,
Unwelcome guest! thy purpose unavowed;
Art thou the shaping of my wildered brain?"
The spectre answered, with a gesture proud,
In hollow accents, — "We will meet again
When the best blood of Rome smokes on Philippi's plain." *William Henry Cuyler Hosmer.*

Scamander (Xanthus), the River.

SCAMANDER.

AND then Achilles, mighty with the spear,
From the steep bank leaped into the mid-stream,
While, foul with ooze, the angry River raised
His waves and pushed along the heaps of dead
Slain by Achilles. These, with mighty roar,
As of a bellowing ox, Scamander cast
Aground; the living with his whirling gulfs
He hid, and saved them in his friendly streams.
In tumult terribly the surges rose
Around Achilles, beating on his shield,
And made his feet to stagger, till he grasped
A tall, fair-growing elm upon the bank.
Down came the tree, and in its loosened roots

Brought the earth with it; the fair stream was checked
By the thick branches, and the prostrate trunk
Bridged it from side to side. Achilles sprang
From the deep pool, and fled with rapid feet
Across the plain in terror. Nor did then
The mighty river-god refrain, but rose
Against him with a darker crest, to drive
The noble son of Peleus from the field,
And so deliver Troy. Pelides sprang
A spear's cast backward, — sprang with all the speed
Of the black eagle's wing, the hunter-bird,
Fleetest and strongest of the fowls of air.
Like him he darted; clashing round his breast,
The brazen mail rang fearfully. Askance
He fled; the water with a mighty roar
Followed him close. As, when a husbandman
Leads forth, from some dark spring of earth, a rill
Among his planted garden-beds, and clears
Its channel, spade in hand, the pebbles there
Move with the current, which runs murmuring down
The sloping surface and outstrips its guide, —
So rushed the waves where'er Achilles ran,
Swift as he was; for mightier are the gods
Than men. As often as the noble son
Of Peleus made a stand in hope to know
Whether the deathless gods of the great heaven
Conspired to make him flee, so often came
A mighty billow of the Jove-born stream
And drenched his shoulders. Then again he sprang
Away; the rapid torrent made his knees
To tremble, while it swept, where'er he trod,

The earth from underneath his feet. He looked
To the broad heaven above him, and complained:
"Will not some god, O Father Jove, put forth
His power to save me in my hour of need
From this fierce river? Any fate but this
I am resigned to suffer. None of all
The immortal ones is more in fault than she
To whom I owe my birth; her treacherous words
Deluded me to think that I should fall
Beneath the walls of Troy by the swift shafts
Of Phœbus. Would that Hector, the most brave
Of warriors reared upon the Trojan soil,
Had slain me; he had slain a brave man then,
And a brave man had stripped me of my arms.
But now it is my fate to perish, caught
In this great river, like a swineherd's boy,
Who in the time of rains attempts to pass
A torrent, and is overwhelmed and drowned."
He spake, and Neptune and Minerva came
Quickly and stood beside him. In the form
Of men they came, and took his hand, and cheered
His spirit with their words. And thus the god
Neptune, who makes the earth to tremble, said:
"Fear not, Pelides, neither let thy heart
Be troubled, since thou hast among the gods,
By Jove's consent, auxiliars such as I
And Pallas. It is not thy doom to be
Thus vanquished by a river. Soon its rage
Will cease, as thou shalt see. Meantime we give
This counsel; heed it well: let not thy hand
Refrain from slaughter till the Trojan host

Are all shut up—all that escape thy arm—
Within the lofty walls of Troy. Then take
The life of Hector, and return on board
Thy galleys; we will make that glory thine."
Thus having spoken, they withdrew and joined
The immortals, while Achilles hastened on,
Encouraged by the mandate of the gods,
Across the plain. The plain was overflowed
With water; sumptuous arms were floating round,
And bodies of slain youths. Achilles leaped,
And stemmed with powerful limbs the stream, and still
Went forward; for Minerva mightily
Had strengthened him. Nor did Scamander fail
To put forth all his power, enraged the more
Against the son of Peleus; higher still
His torrent swelled and tossed with all its waves,
And thus he called to Simoïs with a shout:
"O brother, join with me to hold in check
This man, who threatens soon to overthrow
King Priam's noble city; for no more
The Trojan host resist him. Come at once
And aid me; fill thy channel from its springs,
And summon all thy brooks, and lift on high
A mighty wave, and roll along thy bed,
Mingled in one great torrent, trees and stones,
That we may tame this savage man, who now
In triumph walks the field, and bears himself
As if he were a god. His strength, I deem,
Will not avail him, nor his noble form,
Nor those resplendent arms, which yet shall lie

Scattered along the bottom of my gulfs,
And foul with ooze. Himself, too, I shall wrap
In sand, and pile the rubbish of my bed
In heaps around him. Never shall the Greeks
Know where to gather up his bones, o'erspread
By me with river-slime, for there shall be
His burial-place; no other tomb the Greeks
Will need when they perform his funeral rites.
He spake, and wrathfully he rose against
Achilles, — rose with turbid waves, and noise,
And foam, and blood and bodies of the dead.
One purple billow of the Jove-born stream
Swelled high and whelmed Achilles. Juno saw,
And trembled lest the hero should be whirled
Downward by the great river, and in haste
She called to Vulcan, her beloved son:
"Vulcan, my son, arise! We deemed that thou
And eddying Xanthus were of equal might
In battle. Come with instant aid, and bring
Thy vast array of flames, while from the deep
I call a tempest of the winds, — the West,
And the swift South, — and they shall sweep along
A fiery torrent to consume the foe,
Warriors and weapons. Thou meantime lay waste
The groves along the Xanthus; hurl at him
Thy fires, nor let him with soft words or threats
Avert thy fury. Pause not from the work
Of ruin till I shout and give the sign,
And then shalt thou restrain thy restless fires."
She spake, and Vulcan at her word sent forth
His fierce, devouring flames. Upon the plain

They first were kindled, and consumed the dead
That strewed it, where Achilles struck them down.
The ground was dried; the glimmering flood was stayed.
As when the autumnal north-wind, breathing o'er
A newly watered garden, quickly dries
The clammy mould, and makes the tiller glad,
So did the spacious plain grow dry on which
The dead were turned to ashes. Then the god
Seized on the river with his glittering fires.
The elms, the willows, and the tamarisks
Fell, scorched to cinders, and the lotus-herbs,
Rushes and reeds that richly fringed the banks
Of that fair-flowing current were consumed.

Homer. Tr. W. C. Bryant.

HYLAS.

STORM-WEARIED Argo slept upon the water.
No cloud was seen; on blue and craggy Ida
The hot noon lay, and on the plain's enamel;
Cool, in his bed, alone, the swift Scamander.
"Why should I haste?" said young and rosy Hylas:
"The seas were rough, and long the way from Colchis.
Beneath the snow-white awning slumbers Jason,
Pillowed upon his tame Thessalian panther;
The shields are piled, the listless oars suspended
On the black thwarts, and all the hairy bondsmen
Doze on the benches. They may wait for water,
Till I have bathed in mountain-born Scamander."

So said, unfilleting his purple chlamys,
And putting down his urn, he stood a moment,
Breathing the faint, warm odor of the blossoms
That spangled thick the lovely Dardan meadows.
Then, stooping lightly, loosened he his buskins,
And felt with shrinking feet the crispy verdure,
Naked, save one light robe that from his shoulder
Hung to his knee, the youthful flush revealing
Of warm, white limbs, half nerved with coming manhood,
Yet fair and smooth with tenderness of beauty.
Now to the river's sandy marge advancing,
He dropped the robe, and raised his head exulting
In the clear sunshine, that with beam embracing
Held him against Apollo's glowing bosom;
For sacred to Latona's son is Beauty,
Sacred is Youth, the joy of youthful feeling,
A joy indeed, a living joy, was Hylas,
Whence Jove-begotten Hêraclês, the mighty,
To men though terrible, to him was gentle,
Smoothing his rugged nature into laughter
When the boy stole his club, or from his shoulders
Dragged the huge paws of the Nemæan lion.

The thick, brown locks, tossed backward from his forehead,
Fell soft about his temples; manhood's blossom
Not yet had sprouted on his chin, but freshly
Curved the fair cheek, and full the red lips' parting,
Like a loose bow, that just has launched its arrow.
His large blue eyes, with joy dilate and beamy,

Were clear as the unshadowed Grecian heaven;
Dewy and sleek his dimpled shoulders rounded
To the white arms and whiter breast between them.
Downward, the supple lines had less of softness:
His back was like a god's; his loins were moulded
As if some pulse of power began to waken:
The springy fulness of his thighs, outswerving,
Sloped to his knee, and, lightly dropping downward,
Drew the curved lines that breathe, in rest, of motion.

He saw his glorious limbs reversely mirrored
In the still wave, and stretched his foot to press it
On the smooth sole that answered at the surface:
Alas! the shape dissolved in glimmering fragments.
Then, timidly at first, he dipped, and catching
Quick breath, with tingling shudder, as the waters
Swirled round his thighs, and deeper, slowly deeper,
Till on his breast the River's cheek was pillowed,
And deeper still, till every shoreward ripple
Talked in his ear, and like a cygnet's bosom
His white, round shoulder shed the dripping crystal.
There, as he floated, with a rapturous motion,
The lucid coolness folding close around him,
The lily-cradling ripples murmured, "Hylas!"
He shook from off his ears the hyacinthine
Curls that had lain unwet upon the water,
And still the ripples murmured, "Hylas! Hylas!"
He thought: "The voices are but ear-born music.
Pan dwells not here, and Echo still is calling
From some high cliff that tops a Thracian valley:
So long mine ears, on tumbling Hellespontus,

Have heard the sea-waves hammer Argo's forehead,
That I misdeem the fluting of this current
For some lost nymph — " Again the murmur, " Hylas ! "
And with the sound a cold, smooth arm around him
Slid like a wave, and down the clear, green darkness
Glimmered on either side a shining bosom, —
Glimmered, uprising slow; and ever closer
Wound the cold arms, till, climbing to his shoulders,
Their cheeks lay nestled, while the purple tangles
Their loose hair made, in silken mesh enwound him.
Their eyes of clear, pale emerald then uplifting,
They kissed his neck with lips of humid coral,
And once again there came a murmur, " Hylas ! "
O, come with us ! O, follow where we wander
Deep down beneath the green, translucent ceiling, —
Where on the sandy bed of old Scamander
With cool, white buds we braid our purple tresses,
Lulled by the bubbling waves around us stealing !
Thou fair Greek boy, O, come with us ! O, follow
Where thou no more shalt hear Propontis riot,
But by our arms be lapped in endless quiet,
Within the glimmering caves of Ocean hollow !
We have no love; alone, of all the Immortals,
We have no love. O, love us, we who press thee
With faithful arms, though cold, — whose lips caress thee, —
Who hold thy beauty prisoned ! Love us, Hylas ! "

The boy grew chill to feel their twining pressure
Lock round his limbs, and bear him, vainly striving,

Down from the noonday brightness. "Leave me,
Naiads!
Leave me!" he cried; "the day to me is dearer
Than all your caves deep-sphered in Ocean's quiet.
I am but mortal, seek but mortal pleasure:
I would not change this flexile, warm existence,
Though swept by storms, and shocked by Jove's dread
thunder,
To be a king beneath the dark-green waters."
Still moaned the humid lips, between their kisses,
"We have no love. O, love us, we who love thee!"

And came in answer, thus, the words of Hylas:
"My love is mortal. For the Argive maidens
I keep the kisses which your lips would ravish.
Unlock your cold white arms, take from my shoulder
The tangled swell of your bewildering tresses.
Let me return: the wind comes down from Ida,
And soon the galley, stirring from her slumber,
Will fret to ride where Pelion's twilight shadow
Falls o'er the towers of Jason's sea-girt city.
I am not yours, — I cannot braid the lilies
In your wet hair, nor on your argent bosoms
Close my drowsed eyes to hear your rippling voices.
Hateful to me your sweet, cold, crystal being, —
Your world of watery quiet. Help, Apollo!
For I am thine: thy fire, thy beam, thy music,
Dance in my heart and flood my sense with rapture:
The joy, the warmth and passion now awaken,
Promised by thee, but erewhile calmly sleeping.
O, leave me, Naiads! loose your chill embraces,

Or I shall die, for mortal maidens pining."
But still, with unrelenting arms they bound him,
And still, accordant, flowed their watery voices:
"We have thee now, — we hold thy beauty prisoned;
O, come with us beneath the emerald waters!
We have no love; we love thee, rosy Hylas.
O, love us, who shall nevermore release thee:
Love us, whose milky arms will be thy cradle
Far down on the untroubled sands of ocean,
Where now we bear thee, clasped in our embraces."
And slowly, slowly sank the amorous Naiads;
The boy's blue eyes, upturned, looked through the water,
Pleading for help; but Heaven's immortal Archer
Was swathed in cloud. The ripples hid his forehead,
And last, the thick, bright curls a moment floated,
So warm and silky that the stream upbore them,
Closing reluctant, as he sank forever.

The sunset died behind the crags of Imbros.
Argo was tugging at her chain; for freshly
Blew the swift breeze, and leaped the restless billows.
The voice of Jason roused the dozing sailors,
And up the mast was heaved the snowy canvas.
But mighty Hêraclês, the Jove-begotten,
Unmindful stood, beside the cool Scamander,
Leaning upon his club. A purple chlamys
Tossed o'er an urn was all that lay before him:
And when he called, expectant, "Hylas! Hylas!"
The empty echoes made him answer, — "Hylas!"

Bayard Taylor.

Scio (Chios).

MITHRIDATES AT CHIOS.

KNOW'ST thou, O slave-cursed land!
How, when the Chian's cup of guilt
Was full to overflow, there came
God's justice in the sword of flame
That, red with slaughter to its hilt,
Blazed in the Cappadocian victor's hand?

The heavens are still and far;
But, not unheard of awful Jove,
The sighing of the island slave
Was answered, when the Ægean wave
The keels of Mithridates clove,
And the vines shrivelled in the breath of war.

"Robbers of Chios! hark,"
The victor cried, "to Heaven's decree!
Pluck your last cluster from the vine,
Drain your last cup of Chian wine;
Slaves of your slaves, your doom shall be,
In Colchian mines by Phasis rolling dark."

Then rose the long lament
From the hoar sea-god's dusky caves;
The priestess rent her hair and cried,
"Woe! woe! The gods are sleepless-eyed!"

And, chained and scourged, the slaves of slaves,
The lords of Chios into exile went.

"The gods at last pay well,"
So Hellas sang her taunting song,
"The fisher in his net is caught,
The Chian hath his master bought";
And isle from isle, with laughter long,
Took up and spread the mocking parable.

Once more the slow, dumb years
Bring their avenging cycle round,
And, more than Hellas taught of old,
Our wiser lesson shall be told,
Of slaves uprising, freedom-crowned,
To break, not wield, the scourge wet with their blood and tears.

John Greenleaf Whittier.

Scutari.

SANTA FILOMENA.

WHENE'ER a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts, in glad surprise,
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls,

And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares.

Honor to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
And by their overflow
Raise us from what is low.

Thus thought I, as by night I read
Of the great army of the dead,
The trenches cold and damp,
The starved and frozen camp,—

The wounded from the battle-plain,
In dreary hospitals of pain,
The cheerless corridors,
The cold and stony floors.

Lo! in that house of misery
A lady with a lamp I see
Pass through the glimmering gloom,
And flit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss,
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
Her shadow, as it falls
Upon the darkening walls.

As if a door in heaven should be
Opened and then closed suddenly,
The vision came and went,
The light shone and was spent.

On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
That light its rays shall cast
From portals of the past.

A Lady with a Lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good,
Heroic womanhood.

Nor even shall be wanting here
The palm, the lily, and the spear,
The symbols that of yore
Saint Filomena bore.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Smyrna.

SMYRNA.

SMYRNA contested, with much plausibility, for the honor of being the birthplace of the blind minstrel. A cave in the vicinity is marked by tradition as Homer's retreat.

THE sunset gun has died along the sea,
It is the evening of Bairami's fête.
The torches on each tapering minaret
Flash in the rippling waters of the bay,
And purple vapor dims the droning town.

From Smyrna's dewy gardens floats the scent
Of myrtle, rose, and citron, softly blent,
Like votive incense by each zephyr blown
Around Mæonides' cave. Since he began
His deathless song, weird city of the dead!
Aged Smyrna! thou hast heard the busy tread
Of buried millions, where the caravan
Now wends its tinkling way by Meles' stream,
Where ramparts moulder in the moonlight beam.

Seymour Green Wheeler Benjamin.

SMYRNA.

THE "Ornament of Asia" and the "Crown
Of fair Ionia." Yea; but Asia stands
No more an empress, and Ionia's hands
Have lost their sceptre. Thou, majestic town,
Art as a diamond on a faded robe:
The freshness of thy beauty scatters yet
The radiance of that sun of Empire set,
Whose disk sublime illumed the ancient globe.
Thou sitt'st between the mountains and the sea;
The sea and mountains flatter thine array,
And fill thy courts with grandeur, not decay;
And power, not death, proclaims thy cypress tree.
Through thee, the sovereign symbols Nature lent
Her rise, make Asia's fall magnificent.

Bayard Taylor

TO A PERSIAN BOY

IN THE BAZAAR AT SMYRNA.

THE gorgeous blossoms of that magic tree
Beneath whose shade I sat a thousand nights
Breathed from their opening petals all delights
Embalmed in spice of Orient Poesy,
When first, young Persian, I beheld thine eyes,
And felt the wonder of thy beauty grow
Within my brain, as some fair planet's glow
Deepens, and fills the summer evening skies.
From under thy dark lashes shone on me
The rich, voluptuous soul of Eastern land,
Impassioned, tender, calm, serenely sad, —
Such as immortal Hafiz felt when he
Sang by the fountain-streams of Rocnabad,
Or in the bowers of blissful Samarcand.

Bayard Taylor.

Teos (*Sigagik*).

THE TOMB OF ANACREON.

MOTHER of purple grapes, soul-soothing vine,
Whose verdant boughs their graceful tendrils twine:
Still round this urn, with youth unfading, bloom,
The gentle slope of old Anacreon's tomb.

For so the unmixed-goblet-loving sire,
Touching the livelong night his amorous lyre,
Even low in earth, upon his brows shall wear
The ruddy clustering crowns thy branches bear,
Where, though still fall the sweetest dews, the song
Distilled more sweetly from that old man's tongue.

Simonides. Tr. H. H. Milman.

Tmolus, the Mountain.

AN EPISTLE FROM MOUNT TMOLUS.

TO RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.

I.

O FRIEND, were you but crouched on Tmolus' side,
In the warm myrtles, in the golden air
Of the declining day, which half lays bare,
Half drapes, the silent mountains and the wide
Embosomed vale, that wanders to the sea;
And the far sea, with doubtful specks of sail,
And farthest isles, that slumber tranquilly
Beneath the Ionian autumn's violet veil;—
Were you but with me, little were the need
Of this imperfect artifice of rhyme,
Where the strong Fancy peals a broken chime
And the ripe brain but sheds abortive seed.
But I am solitary, and the curse,
Or blessing, which has clung to me from birth,—

The torment and the ecstasy of verse, —
Comes up to me from the illustrious earth
Of ancient Tmolus; and the very stones,
Reverberant, din the mellow air with tones
Which the sweet air remembers; and they blend
With fainter echoes, which the mountains fling
From far oracular caverns: so, my friend,
I cannot choose but sing!

II.

Unto mine eye, less plain the shepherds be,
Tending their browsing goats amid the broom,
Or the slow camels, travelling towards the sea,
Laden with bales from Baghdad's gaudy loom,
Or yon nomadic Turcomans, that go
Down from their summer pastures, — than the twain
Immortals, who on Tmolus' thymy top
Sang, emulous, the rival strain!
Down the charmed air did light Apollo drop;
Great Pan ascended from the vales below.
I see them sitting in the silent glow;
I hear the alternating measures flow
From pipe and golden lyre; — the melody
Heard by the Gods between their nectar bowls,
Or when, from out the chambers of the sea,
Comes the triumphant Morning, and unrolls
A pathway for the sun; then, following swift,
The dædal harmonies of awful caves
Cleft in the hills, and forests that uplift
Their sea-like boom, in answer to the waves,

With many a lighter strain, that dances o'er
The wedded reeds, till Echo strives in vain
To follow;
Hark! once more,
How floats the God's exultant strain
In answer to Apollo!

"The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
The cicàle above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass
Are as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
Listening to my sweet pipings."

Bayard Taylor.

Troy.

TROY.

SHE said, and in the heart of Helen woke
Dear recollections of her former spouse
And of her home and kindred. Instantly
She left her chamber, robed and veiled in white,
And shedding tender tears; yet not alone,
For with her went two maidens, — Æthra, child
Of Pitheus, and the large-eyed Clymene.
Straight to the Scæan gates they walked, by which
Panthoüs, Priam, and Thymœtes sat,
Lampus and Clytius, Hicetaon sprung

From Mars, Antenor and Ucalegon,
Two sages, — elders of the people all.
Beside the gates they sat, unapt, through age,
For tasks of war, but men of fluent speech,
Like the cicades that within the wood
Sit on the trees and utter delicate sounds.
Such were the nobles of the Trojan race
Who sat upon the tower. But when they marked
The approach of Helen, to each other thus
With winged words, but in low tones, they said: —

"Small blame is theirs, if both the Trojan knights
And brazen-mailed Achaians have endured
So long so many evils for the sake
Of that one woman. She is wholly like
In feature to the deathless goddesses.
So be it: let her, peerless as she is,
Return on board the fleet, nor stay to bring
Disaster upon us and all our race."

So spake the elders. Priam meantime called
To Helen: "Come, dear daughter, sit by me.
Thou canst behold thy former husband hence,
Thy kindred and thy friends. I blame thee not;
The blame is with the immortals who have sent
These pestilent Greeks against me. Sit and name
For me this mighty man, the Grecian chief,
Gallant and tall. True, there are taller men;
But of such noble form and dignity
I never saw: in truth, a kingly man."

And Helen, fairest among women, thus
Answered: "Dear second father, whom at once
I fear and honor, would that cruel death

Had overtaken me before I left,
To wander with thy son, my marriage-bed,
And my dear daughter, and the company
Of friends I loved. But that was not to be;
And now I pine and weep. Yet will I tell
What thou dost ask. The hero whom thou seest
Is the wide-ruling Agamemnon, son
Of Atreus, and is both a gracious king
And a most dreaded warrior. He was once
Brother-in-law to me, if I may speak, —
Lost as I am to shame, — of such a tie."

She said, the aged man admired, and then
He spake again: "O son of Atreus, born
Under a happy fate, and fortunate
Among the sons of men! A mighty host
Of Grecian youths obey thy rule. I went
To Phrygia once, — that land of vines, — and there
Saw many Phrygians, heroes on fleet steeds,
The troops of Otreus, and of Mygdon, shaped
Like one of the immortals. They encamped
By the Sangarius. I was an ally;
My troops were ranked with theirs upon the day
When came the unsexed Amazons to war.
Yet even there I saw not such a host
As this of black-eyed Greeks who muster here."

Then Priam saw Ulysses, and inquired: —
"Dear daughter, tell me also who is that,
Less tall than Agamemnon, yet more broad
In chest and shoulders. On the teeming earth
His armor lies, but he, from place to place,
Walks round among the ranks of soldiery,

As when the thick-fleeced father of the flocks
Moves through the multitude of his white sheep."
And Jove-descended Helen answered thus: —
"That is Ulysses, man of many arts,
Son of Laertes, reared in Ithaca,
That rugged isle, and skilled in every form
Of shrewd device and action wisely planned."
Then spake the sage Antenor: "Thou hast said
The truth, O lady. This Ulysses once
Came on an embassy, concerning thee,
To Troy with Menelaus, great in war;
And I received them as my guests, and they
Were lodged within my palace, and I learned
The temper and the qualities of both.
When both were standing mid the men of Troy,
I marked that Menelaus's broad chest
Made him the more conspicuous, but when both
Were seated, greater was the dignity
Seen in Ulysses. When they both addressed
The council, Menelaus briefly spake
In pleasing tones, though with few words, — as one
Not given to loose and wandering speech, — although
The younger. When the wise Ulysses rose,
He stood with eyes cast down, and fixed on earth,
And neither swayed his sceptre to the right
Nor to the left, but held it motionless,
Like one unused to public speech. He seemed
An idiot out of humor. But when forth
He sent from his full lungs his mighty voice,
And words came like a fall of winter snow,
No mortal then would dare to strive with him

For mastery in speech. We less admired
The aspect of Ulysses than his words."
Beholding Ajax then, the aged king
Asked yet again: "Who is that other chief
Of the Achaians, tall, and large of limb, —
Taller and broader-chested than the rest?"
Helen, the beautiful and richly-robed,
Answered: "Thou seest the mighty Ajax there,
The bulwark of the Greeks. On the other side,
Among his Cretans, stands Idomeneus,
Of godlike aspect, near to whom are grouped
The leaders of the Cretans. Oftentimes
The warlike Menelaus welcomed him
Within our palace, when he came from Crete.
I could point out and name the other chiefs
Of the dark-eyed Achaians. Two alone,
Princes among their people, are not seen, —
Castor, the fearless horseman, and the skilled
In boxing, Pollux, — twins; one mother bore
Both at one birth with me. Did they not come
From pleasant Lacedæmon to the war?
Or, having crossed the deep in their good ships,
Shun they to fight among the valiant ones
Of Greece, because of my reproach and shame?"
She spake; but they already lay in earth
In Lacedæmon, their dear native land.

Homer. Tr. W. C. Bryant.

TROY.

CASSANDRA, beautiful as Venus, stood
On Pergamus, and from its height discerned
Her father, standing on the chariot-seat,
And knew the herald, him whose voice so oft
Summoned the citizens, and knew the dead
Stretched on a litter drawn by mules. She raised
Her voice, and called to all the city thus: —
"O Trojan men and women, hasten forth
To look on Hector, if ye e'er rejoiced
To see him coming from the field alive,
The pride of Troy, and all who dwell in her."
She spake, and suddenly was neither man
Nor woman left within the city bounds.
Deep grief was on them all; they went to meet,
Near to the gates, the monarch bringing home
The dead. And first the wife whom Hector loved
Rushed with his reverend mother to the car
As it rolled on, and, plucking out their hair,
Touched with their hands the forehead of the dead,
While round it pressed the multitude, and wept,
And would have wept before the gates all day,
Even to the set of sun, in bitter grief
For Hector's loss, had not the aged man
Addressed the people from his chariot-seat:
"Give place to me, and let the mules pass on,
And ye may weep your fill when once the dead
Is laid within the palace." As he spake,
The throng gave way and let the chariot pass;

And having brought it to the royal halls,
On a fair couch they laid the corse, and placed
Singers beside it, leaders of the dirge,
Who sang a sorrowful, lamenting strain,
And all the women answered it with sobs.
White-armed Andromache in both her hands
Took warlike Hector's head, and over it
Began the lamentation midst them all: —

"Thou hast died young, my husband, leaving me
In this thy home a widow, and one son,
An infant yet. To an unhappy pair
He owes his birth, and never will, I fear,
Bloom into youth; for ere that day will Troy
Be overthrown, since thou, its chief defence,
Art dead, the guardian of its walls and all
Its noble matrons and its speechless babes,
Yet to be carried captive far away,
And I among them, in the hollow barks;
And thou, my son, wilt either go with me,
Where thou shalt toil at menial tasks for some
Pitiless master; or perhaps some Greek
Will seize thy little arm, and in his rage
Will hurl thee from a tower and dash thee dead,
Remembering how thy father, Hector, slew
His brother, son, or father; for the hand
Of Hector forced full many a Greek to bite
The dust of earth. Not slow to smite was he
In the fierce conflict; therefore all who dwell
Within the city sorrow for his fall.
Thou bringest an unutterable grief,
O Hector, on thy parents, and on me

The sharpest sorrows. Thou didst not stretch forth
Thy hands to me, in dying, from thy couch,
Nor speak a word to comfort me, which I
Might ever think of night and day with tears."

Homer. Tr. W. C. Bryant.

BEFORE THE WALLS OF TROY.

SO Hector said, and sea-like roared his host;
Then loosed their sweating horses from the yoke
And each beside his chariot bound his own;
And oxen from the city, and goodly sheep
In haste they drove, and honey-hearted wine
And bread from out the houses brought, and heaped
Their fire-wood, and the winds from off the plain
Rolled the rich vapor far into the heaven.
And these all night upon the bridge of war
Sat glorying; many a fire before them blazed:
As when in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine upon the shepherd gladdens in his heart:
So many a fire between the ships and stream
Of Hanthus blazed before the towers of Troy,
A thousand on the plain; and close by each
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;
And champing golden grain, the horses stood
Hard by their chariots, waiting for the dawn.

Homer. Tr. A. Tennyson.

FALL OF TROY.

CHORUS. What speed could be the herald of this news?

CLYTEMNESTRA. The fire, that from the height of Ida sent
Its streaming light, as from the announcing flame
Torch blazed to torch. First Ida to the steep
Of Lemnos; Athos' sacred height received
The mighty splendor; from the surging back
Of the Hellespont the vigorous blaze held on
Its smiling way, and like the Orient sun,
Illumes with golden-gleaming rays the head
Of rocky Macetas; nor lingers there,
Nor winks unheedful, but its warning flames
Darts to the streams of Euripus, and gives
Its glittering signal to the guards that hold
Their high watch on Mesapius. These enkindle
The joy-denouncing fires, that spread the blaze
To where Erica hoar its shaggy brow
Waves rudely. Unimpaired the active flame
Bounds o'er the level of Asopus, like
The jocund moon, and on Cithæron's steep
Wakes a successive flame; the distant watch
Agnize its shine, and raise a brighter fire,
That o'er the lake Gorgopis streaming holds
Its rapid course, and on the mountainous heights
Of Ægiplanctus huge, swift shooting spreads

The lengthened line of light. Thence onward waves
Its fiery tresses, eager to ascend
The crags of Prone, frowning in their pride
O'er the Saronic gulf: it leaps, it mounts
The summit of Arachne, whose high head
Looks down on Argos: to this royal seat
Thence darts the light that from the Idæan fire
Derives its birth. Rightly in order thus
Each to the next consigns the torch that fills
The bright succession, whilst the first in speed
Vies with the last; the promised signal this
Given by my lord to announce the fall of Troy.

Æschylus. Tr. R. Potter.

SONG OF THE TROJAN CAPTIVE.

O MY Ilion, once we named thee
City of the unconquered men;
But the Grecian spear has tamed thee,
Thou canst never rise again,
Grecian clouds thy causeways darken;—
Ah! they cannot hide thy glory!
Ages hence shall heroes hearken
To the wonders of thy story.

O my Ilion, they have shorn thee
Of thy lofty crown of towers!
Thy poor daughter can but mourn thee
In her lonely, captive hours.
They have robbed thee of thy beauty,
Made thee foul with smoke and gore;

Tears are now my only duty,
I shall tread thy streets no more.

O my Ilion, I remember —
'T was the hour of sweet repose,
And my husband in our chamber
Slept, nor dreamt of Grecian foes.
For the song and feast were over,
And the spear was hung to rest,
Never more, my hero-lover,
Aimed by thee at foeman's breast.

O my Ilion, at the mirror
I was binding up my hair,
When my face grew pale with terror
At the cry that rent the air.
Hark! amid the din the Grecian
Shout of triumph, "Troy is taken;
Ten years' work has now completion, —
Ilion's haughty towers are shaken!"

O my Ilion, forth I hie me
From his happy home and mine;
Hapless, soon the Greeks descried me,
As I knelt at Phœbe's shrine.
Then, my husband slain before me,
To the shore they hurried me,
And from all I loved they tore me
Fainting o'er the cruel sea.

Euripides. Tr. J. Reade.

TROY.

WHEN sated with joy which slaughters yield,
Retiring Cæsar left Emathia's field;
His other cares laid by, he sought alone
To trace the footsteps of his flying son.
Led by the guidance of reporting fame,
First to the Thracian Hellespont he came.
Here young Leander perished in the flood,
And here the tower of mournful Hero stood:
Here with a narrow stream the flowing tide
Europe from wealthy Asia does divide.
From hence the curious victor passing o'er,
Admiring, sought the famed Sigæan shore.
There might he tombs of Grecian chiefs behold,
Renowned in sacred verse by bards of old.
There the long ruins of the walls appeared,
Once by great Neptune and Apollo reared:
There stood old Troy, a venerable name,
Forever consecrate to deathless fame.
Now blasted mossy trunks with branches sear,
Brambles and weeds, a loathsome forest rear;
Where once in palaces of regal state
Old Priam and the Trojan princes sate.
Where temples once, on lofty columns borne,
Majestic did the wealthy town adorn,
All rude, all waste and desolate is laid,
And even the ruined ruins are decayed.
Here Cæsar did each storied place survey,

Here saw the rock where, Neptune to obey,
Hesione was bound the monster's prey.
Here, in the covert of a secret grove,
The blest Anchises clasped the Queen of Love:
Here fair Œnone played, here stood the cave
Where Paris once the fatal judgment gave;
Here lovely Ganymede to heaven was borne;
Each rock and every tree recording tales adorn.
Here all that does of Xanthus' stream remain
Creeps a small brook along the dusty plain.
Whilst careless and securely on they pass,
The Phrygian guide forbids to press the grass:
This place, he said, forever sacred keep,
For here the sacred bones of Hector sleep.
Then warns him to observe where, rudely cast,
Disjointed stones lay broken and defaced:
Here his last fate, he cries, did Priam prove;
Here, on this altar of Hercæan Jove.
O Poesy divine! O sacred song!
To thee bright fame and length of days belong;
Thou, Goddess! thou eternity canst give,
And bid secure the mortal hero live.

Lucan. Tr. N. Rowe.

THE SHORES OF TROY.

AS rose in heaven the morning clear and bright,
Ida's long towery ridge appeared in sight;
Next Chrysa's isle, and Smintheus' holy fane,
Then bold Sigeum beetling o'er the main;

And great Pelides' tomb,—that point alone
With gentle care Ulysses to the son
Delayed, far rising o'er the waves, to show,
Cautious to make the deep but slumbering woe.

Quintus Calaber. Tr. H. H. Milman.

TROY.

TIME'S ashes, on my turrets shed,
Have worn their pride away;
I am that Ilion of whom men have read
In Homer's living lay.

No more shall Argive sword and spear
My brazen bulwark shake;
But in the voice of nations loud and clear
My monument I make.

Evenus. Tr. Anon.

TROY.

BUT Troy, alas, methought, above them all,
It made mine eyes in very tears consume:
When I beheld the woful word befall,
That by the wrathful will of gods was come;
And Jove's unmoved sentence and foredoom
On Priam king, and on his town so bent.
I could not lin but I must there lament.

And that the more, sith destiny was so stern
As, force perforce, there might no force avail,

But she must fall; and by her fall we learn
That cities, towers, wealth, world, and all shall quail:
No manhood might, nor nothing might prevail;
All were there prest full many a prince, and peer,
And many a knight that sold his death full dear.

Not worthy Hector, worthiest of them all,
Her hope, her joy, his force is now for naught:
O Troy, Troy, Troy, there is no boot but bale,
The hugy horse within thy walls is brought;
Thy turrets fall, thy knights, that whilom fought
In arms amid the field, are slain in bed,
Thy gods defiled, and all thy honor dead.

The flames upspring, and cruelly they creep
From wall to roof, till all to cinders waste:
Some fire the houses where the wretches sleep,
Some rush in here, some run in there as fast;
In everywhere or sword or fire they taste:
The walls are torn, the towers whirled to the ground;
There is no mischief but may there be found.

Cassandra yet there saw I how they haled
From Pallas' house, with spercled tress undone,
Her wrists fast bound, and with Greeks' rout empaled:
And Priam eke, in vain how he did run
To arms, whom Pyrrhus with despite hath done
To cruel death, and bathed him in the baign
Of his son's blood, before the altar slain.

But how can I describe the doleful sight,
That in the shield so livelike fair did shine?

Sith in this world I think was never wight
Could have set forth the half, not half so fine:
I can no more, but tell how there is seen
Fair Ilium fall in burning red gledes down,
And, from the soil, great Troy, Neptunus' town.

Thomas Sackville.

PICTURE OF SCENES IN THE TROJAN WAR.

AT last she calls to mind where hangs a piece
Of skilful painting, made for Priam's Troy;
Before the which is drawn the power of Greece,
For Helen's rape the city to destroy,
Threatening cloud-kissing Ilion with annoy;
Which the conceited painter drew so proud,
As heaven (it seemed) to kiss the turrets bow'd.

A thousand lamentable objects there,
In scorn of nature, art gave lifeless life:
Many a dry drop seem'd a weeping tear,
Shed for the slaughter'd husband by the wife:
The red blood reek'd, to shew the painter's strife;
And dying eyes gleam'd forth their ashy lights,
Like dying coals burnt out in tedious nights.

There might you see the labouring pioneer
Begrim'd with sweat, and smeared all with dust;
And from the towers of Troy there would appear
The very eyes of men through loop-holes thrust,
Gazing upon the Greeks with little lust:

Such sweet observance in this work was had,
That one might see those far-off eyes look sad.

In great commanders grace and majesty
You might behold triumphing in their faces;
In youth, quick bearing and dexterity;
And here and there the painter interlaces
Pale cowards, marching on with trembling paces;
Which heartless peasants did so well resemble,
That one would swear he saw them quake and tremble.

In Ajax and Ulysses, O, what art
Of physiognomy might one behold!
The face of either 'cipher'd either's heart;
Their face their manners most expressly told:
In Ajax' eyes blunt rage and rigour roll'd;
But the mild glance that sly Ulysses lent
Shewed deep regard and smiling government.

There pleading might you see grave Nestor stand,
As 't were encouraging the Greeks to fight;
Making such sober action with his hand,
That it beguiled attention, charm'd the sight;
In speech, it seem'd, his beard, all silver white,
Wagg'd up and down, and from his lips did fly
Thin winding breath, which purl'd up to the sky.

About him were a press of gaping faces,
Which seem'd to swallow up his sound advice;
All jointly listening, but with several graces,
As if some mermaid did their ears entice;

Some high, some low; the painter was so nice,
The scalps of many, almost hid behind,
To jump up higher seem'd to mock the mind.

Here one man's hand lean'd on another's head,
His nose being shadow'd by his neighbour's ear;
Here one, being throng'd, bears back, all boll'n and red;
Another, smother'd, seems to pelt and swear;
And in their rage such signs of rage they bear,
As, but for loss of Nestor's golden words,
It seem'd they would debate with angry swords.

For much imaginary work was there;
Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind,
That for Achilles' image stood his spear,
Griped in an armed hand; himself, behind,
Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind:
A hand, a foot, a face, a leg, a head,
Stood for the whole to be imagined.

And from the walls of strong-besieged Troy
When their brave hope, bold Hector, march'd to field,
Stood many Trojan mothers, sharing joy
To see their youthful sons bright weapons wield;
And to their hope they such odd action yield,
That, through their light joy, seemed to appear
(Like bright things stain'd) a kind of heavy fear.

And, from the strond of Dardan where they fought,
To Simois' reedy banks the red blood ran,
Whose waves to imitate the battle sought
With swelling ridges; and their ranks began

To break upon the galled shore, and then
Retire again, till meeting greater ranks
They join, and shoot their foam at Simois' banks.

William Shakespeare.

CASSANDRA.

JOY in Troja's courts abounded
Ere the lofty ramparts fell;
Hymns of jubilee resounded
From the golden-chorded shell.
Now from fields of strife and slaughter
Rests at peace each valiant head,
While to Priam's fairest daughter
Peleus' godlike son must wed.

There, bedecked with boughs of laurel,
Where the columned fanes extend,
Troop on troop, in bright apparel,
To the Thymbrian's altar bend.
Through the streets the Bacchic madness
Rushing comes with hollow swell,
And on thoughts of silent sadness
One alone is left to dwell.

Joyless most where joy exceeded,
Did Cassandra's footsteps rove,
Lonely, desolate, unheeded,
Through Apollo's laurel grove.
Mid the forest depths slow winding
Wandered the prophetic maid,

And, her sacred locks unbinding,
Flung to earth the mystic braid.

"Joy forgotten — bliss forsaken —
Each exulting bosom shares;
And the sires new hopes awaken,
And glad pomp the sister wears.
I alone must inly sorrow,
Whom the sweet illusions fly,
Who behold the fatal morrow,
Winged with ruin, hover nigh.

"Lo, a torch! I see it flaring —
Not, alas! in Hymen's hand —
In the clouds behold it glaring, —
But 't is not an altar-brand.
Lo! the festal board they 're spreading;
But my full foreboding mind
Marks the fateful footsteps treading
Of the gloomy god behind.

"And they call my moaning madness,
And they mock my bosom's smart:
Lonely then, in silent sadness,
Let me wear my burdened heart.
By the happy shunned, discarded,
Scorn of pleasure's frolic ring,
Heavy falls thy lot awarded,
Pythian god! — remorseless king!

"Wherefore hath thy fatal kindness
My awakened sense decreed,

In this land of utter blindness
Thy dark oracles to read?
Visual sense too perfect lending,
Why withhold the warding power?
It must fall — the doom impending, —
Must draw on — the dreaded hour.

"Wherefore lift the veil, where terror
Darkly hovering threats our breath?
Life itself is naught but error,
And to know — alas! is death.
Hide, O, hide fate's dreary portal!
Make mine eyes from blood-stain free!
'T is a fearful thing, the mortal
Vessel of thy truth to be.

"My blest ignorance restore me,
And the joys that once were mine!
Ne'er came strains of gladness o'er me
Since my voice hath echoed thine.
Thou, the thankless future giving,
Didst the present render vain;
Vain the hope, the bliss of living, —
Take thy false gift back again!

"With the bridal chaplet never
Might my perfumed locks be crowned,
Since thy servant I, forever,
At the altar's foot was bound.
All youth's spring-tide sorrow-shaken,
Life consumed in ceaseless smart,

Each rude shock by Troy partaken
Smote on my presaging heart.

"Treading light youth's sportive measures,
Others wake to life and love, —
All who shared my childhood's pleasures;
I — can only anguish prove!
Spring, that clothes the earth in glory,
Brings no rapture to my mind.
Who that reads life's coming story
Aught of bliss in life can find?

"Polyxene! for blest I hold thee,
Who, in bright illusions dressed,
Think'st this night he shall enfold thee, —
He — of Greeks the first and best.
See, with pride her bosom swelling —
Transports she can scarce contain —
Heavenly powers! yourselves excelling
In the dream that fires her brain.

"I too saw him, whom my beating
Heart its bosom-lord proclaimed, —
Saw his beauteous face entreating,
With the glow of love enflamed.
Then, methought, with him how brightly
Might my days domestic shine!
But a Stygian vision nightly
Stepped betwixt his arms and mine.

"All her pallid spectres yonder
From the queen of night repair:

Wheresoe'er I walk or wander —
Grisly shapes! — I see them there.
Even while frolic youth ran bounding,
Thronging still they on me pressed,
Ghastly crowds my path surrounding. —
No! I never can be blest.

"Murder's steel — I see it glancing;
Murder's eye — I see it glare.
Right or left my sight advancing,
Horror meets me everywhere.
Though I fain would 'scape, unwilling, —
Knowing, shuddering, fixed I stand,
And, my destiny fulfilling,
Perish in the stranger land."

Scarce the voice prophetic ended,
Hark! wild clamors rolling spread, —
At the temple gate extended,
Thetis' mighty son lies dead.
Discord rears her snaky tresses;
All the gods afar have flown;
And the thunder-cloud thick presses
Heavily o'er Ilion.

Friedrich von Schiller. Tr. J. H. Merivale.

TROY.

ALL the sweet day the favoring Zephyr sped
Our white-sailed pinnace o'er the wavy main,
And now, at eve, we watching from her head
Saw the dark outline of the Trojan plain,
Misty and dim, as things at distance seem
Through the fast-waning light of summer eve,
When, waking from their sultry, sad day-dream,
The wan-faced stars grow bright and cease to grieve.
And nearer yet and nearer grew the shore,
Which eve was tinting sober-gray and pale;
And louder swelled the long, low, broken roar
Of surges climbing o'er the loose-heaped shale.

* * *

Full soon we grated on the shingly beach;
Soon disembarked upon that storied shore,
Whose very rocks are eloquent to teach
A world of legend and forgotten lore.
Then parted; and I musing went along,
Half fearing it might prove delusion strange,
Or sweet enchantment of a magic song,
Which loud-spoke word might dissipate or change.
Still on; while overhead the moon alway
Kept on its course across the sea of sky,
Fathomless-blue, save for some cloudy spray,
And those bright isles, the stars that never die;
Until I reached a barrow long and low,
Which the tall grass clothed o'er and wild vines free,

That still, whenever any breeze did blow,
Waved shadowy like the falling of the sea;
And gazing thence upon the moonlit plain,
The voiceful silence of the saddening scene
Called up a city's phantom to my brain,
And caused me muse of what Troy once had been.
How doth the memory of heroic deeds,
Wrought by the heroes of the elder time,
Clothe o'er thy site more than the mantling weeds,
And round thy brows a deathless laurel twine.
Just as those fires which lit the midnight sky,
Changing so many watchful tears to smiles,
Wafted to Hellas the exultant cry,
"Troja is fallen," o'er the Grecian isles;
So doth thy story, mid the rocks of time,
Echo along the unending cycles through,
Pealing thy name in most melodious chime,
Ne'er growing fainter, nor its notes more few.
All to the magic of that world-sung song,
That god-breathed legend dost thou owe thy fame;
The golden weft the blind man wove so long,
Hath linked to immortality thy name.
His tale to many another's lyre hath given
Its stirring echoes; and in every age
What story more than of thy woes hath riven
Their hearts who dream upon the poet's page.
And though for long thou in the dust hast lain,
Still, still the visions of the mighty past,
The memory of thy struggle, and thy pain,
Thy god-built turrets, — these forever last.

* * *

Yet still 'twixt thee and Tenedos there pours
Just as of old the trough of angry sea,
And on the oozy sand still breaks and roars,
As when the black keels lined the yellow lea.
And still the pines of Ida wave aloft
Their tuneful, scented, dove-embowering shade;
And 'neath them twilight broods as gray and soft
As when of yore the shepherd Paris strayed
With glad Œnone; while their bleating flocks
Grazed the wild thyme bright with ambrosial dew;
And lovers piping 'neath the o'ershadowing rocks
Laded with love the breezes as they flew.
Still Simois wanders mid his voiceful reeds,
And Xanthus rolls his slender length along,
Telling the story of thy mighty deeds,
In lagging accents of a tearful song.
All these, O Troy, — thy streams and woody hill,
Thy barren beach whereon the long ships lay,
Thy famous isle, — the invaders haunt, — are still;
But Priam's Ilion hath passed away.
Hath passed, I said; thy memory ne'er can fade!
The muse hath won thee from the dead again;
A golden glory crowns for aye thy shade;
Thou livest, O Troy, forever unto men!

R. T. Nicholl.

MESOPOTAMIA.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

SO on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied; and overhead up grew
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar and pine and fir and branching palm,
A sylvan scene; and, as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise up sprung;
Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighboring round.
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,

Appeared, with gay enamelled colors mixed;
On which the sun more glad impressed his beams,
Than in fair evening cloud or humid bow,
When God hath showered the earth; so lovely seemed
That landskip; and of pure now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair: now gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are passed
Mozambic, off at sea northeast-winds blow
Sabæan odors from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blessed; with such delay
Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league
Cheered with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles.

* * *

One gate there only was, and that looked east
On the other side: which when the arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdained; and in contempt,
At one slight bound high overleaped all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault,

In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew; and on the Tree of Life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regained, but sat devising death
To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only used
For prospect, what well used had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him; but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views,
To all delight of human sense exposed,
In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth, yea, more,
A heaven on earth: for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in the east
Of Eden planted: Eden stretched her line
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings;
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordained:
Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold; and next to Life,
Our death, the Tree of Knowledge, grew fast by,

Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
Passed underneath ingulfed; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden-mould, high raised
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst updrawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Watered the garden, thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears;
And now, divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How from that sapphire fount the crispéd brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise; which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Poured forth profuse on hill and dale and plain;
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierced shade
Imbrowned the noontide bowers. Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view:
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm;
Others, whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste.
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks

Grazing the tender herb, were interposed;
Or palmy hillock, or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store;
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; meanwhile murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringéd bank with myrtle crowned
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves; while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on the eternal spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son,
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye;
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some supposed
True Paradise, under the Ethiop line
By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,

A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend
Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honor clad
In naked majesty, seemed lords of all;
And worthy seemed: for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
Severe, but in true filial freedom placed;
Whence true authority in men: though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal, seemed;
For contemplation he and valor formed,
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him.
His fair large front and eye sublime declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
Her unadornéd golden tresses wore
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved
As the vine curls her tendrils; which implied
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.

John Milton.

MESOPOTAMIA.

Babylon.

THE BUILDING OF THE TOWER OF BABEL, AND CONFUSION OF TONGUES.

THEIR great fortress then did they found,
And cast till they gat sure ground.
All fell to work, both man and child,
Some howkit clay, some burnt the tyld.
Nimrod, that curious champion,
Deviser was of that dungeon.
Nathing they spared their labors,
Like busy bees upon the flowers,
Or emmets travelling into June;
Some under wrocht, and some aboon,
With strang ingenious masonry,
Upward their wark did fortify;
The land about was fair and plain,
And it rase like ane heich montane.
Those fulish people did intend,
That till the heaven it should ascend;

Sae great ane strength was never seen
Into the warld with men's een.
The wallis of that wark they made,
Twa and fifty fathom braid:
Ane fathom then, as some men says,
Micht been twa fathom in our days;
Ane man was then of mair stature
Nor twa be now, of this be sure.

The translator of Orosius
Intil his chronicle writes thus;
That when the sun is at the hicht,
At noon, when it doth shine maist bricht,
The shadow of that hideous strength
Sax mile and mair it is of length:
Thus may ye judge into your thocht,
Gif Babylon be heich or nocht.

Then the great God omnipotent,
To whom all things been present,
He seeand the ambition,
And the prideful presumption,
How thir proud people did pretend,
Up through the heavens till ascend,
Sic languages on them he laid,
That nane wist what ane other said;
Where was but ane language afore,
God send them languages three score;
Afore that time all spak Hebrew,
Then some began for to speak Grew,
Some Dutch, some language Saracen,

And some began to speak Latin.
The maister men gan to ga wild,
Cryand for trees, they brocht them tyld.
Some said, Bring mortar here at ance,
Then brocht they to them stocks and stanes;
And Nimrod, their great champion,
Ran ragand like ane wild lion,
Menacing them with words rude,
But never ane word they understood.

Sir David Lyndsay.

BABYLON.

THE many-colored domes
Yet wore one dusky hue;
The cranes upon the mosque
Kept their night-clatter still,
When through the gate the early traveller passed.
And when, at evening, o'er the swampy plain
The bittern's boom came far,
Distinct in darkness seen
Above the low horizon's lingering light,
Rose the near ruins of old Babylon.

Once from her lofty walls the charioteer
Looked down on swarming myriads; once she flung
Her arches o'er Euphrates' conquered tide,
And through her brazen portals when she poured
Her armies forth, the distant nations looked
As men who watch the thunder-cloud in fear,
Lest it should burst above them. She was fallen!

The Queen of cities, Babylon, was fallen!
Low lay her bulwarks; the black scorpion basked
In the palace-courts; within the sanctuary
The she-wolf hid her whelps.
Is yonder huge and shapeless heap, what once
Hath been the aerial gardens, height on height
Rising like Media's mountains crowned with wood,
Work of imperial dotage? Where the fame
Of Belus? Where the Golden Image now,
Which at the sound of dulcimer and lute,
Cornet and sackbut, harp and psaltery,
The Assyrian slaves adored?
A labyrinth of ruins, Babylon
Spreads o'er the blasted plain;
The wandering Arab never sets his tent
Within her walls; the shepherd eyes afar
Her evil towers, and devious drives his flock.
Alone unchanged, a free and bridgeless tide,
Euphrates rolls along,
Eternal nature's work.

Robert Southey.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

THE king was on his throne,
The satraps thronged the hall:
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deemed divine,—
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless heathen's wine!

In that same hour and hall
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless waxed his look,
And tremulous his voice.
"Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth."

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.

The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night—
The morrow proved it true.

"Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom passed away;
He, in the balance weighed,
Is light and worthless clay.
The shroud his robe of state,
His canopy the stone:
The Mede is at his gate!
The Persian on his throne!"

Lord Byron.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT.

WE sat down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, O her desolate daughters,
Were scattered all weeping away.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which rolled on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, O, never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be withered forever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

On the willow that harp is suspended,
O Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!

Lord Byron.

OH, WEEP FOR THOSE.

OH, weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
Mourn—where their God hath dwelt, the godless dwell!

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leaped before its heavenly voice?

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest!
The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country,—Israel but the grave!

Lord Byron.

BENINA TO BELSHAZZAR.

I HEAR abroad
The exultation of unfettered earth!
From east to west they lift their trampled necks,
The indignant nations: earth breaks out in scorn;

The valleys dance and sing; the mountains shake
Their cedar-crownéd tops! The strangers crowd
To gaze upon the howling wilderness,
Where stood the Queen of Nations. Lo! even now,
Lazy Euphrates rolls his sullen waves
Through wastes, and but reflects his own thick reeds.
I hear the bitterns shriek, the dragons cry;
I see the shadow of the midnight owl
Gliding where now are laughter-echoing palaces!
O'er the vast plain I see the mighty tombs
Of kings, in sad and broken whiteness gleam
Beneath the o'ergrown cypress, — but no tomb
Bears record, Babylon, of thy last lord;
Even monuments are silent of Belshazzar!

Henry Hart Milman.

BABYLON.

MANY a perilous age hath gone,
Since the walls of Babylon
Chained the broad Euphrates' tide,
Which the great king in his pride
Turned, and drained its channel bare, —
Since the Towers of Belus square,
Where the solid gates were hung
That on brazen hinges swung,
Mountain-sized, arose so high
That their daring shocked the sky.

Famous city of the earth,
What magician gave thee birth?

What great prince of sky or air
Built thy floating gardens fair?
Thee the mighty hunter founded:
Thee the star-wise king surrounded
With thy mural girdle thick
Of the black bitumen brick, —
Belus, who was Jove, the God:
He who each bright evening trod
On thy marble streets, and came
Downwards like a glancing flame,
Love-allured, as fables tell.
But the last who loved thee well
Was the king whose amorous pride
(All to please his Median bride)
Fenced thee round and round so fast,
That, while the crumbling earth should last,
Thou, he thought, shouldst be, and Time
Should not spoil thy look sublime.

He is gone, whose spirit spoke
To him in a golden dream:
He who saw the future gleam
On the present, and awoke
Troubled in his princely mind,
And bade his magicians blind
From their eyelids strip the scale,
And translate his hidden tale:
He is gone: but ere he died,
He was tumbled from his pride,
From his Babylonian throne,
And cast out to feed alone,

Like the wild ox and the ass,
Seven years on the sprinkled grass.
He is dead: his impious deeds
Are on the brass; but who succeeds?

Over Babylon's sandy plains
Belshazzar the Assyrian reigns.
A thousand lords at his kingly call
Have met to feast in a spacious hall,
And all the imperial boards are spread,
With dainties whereon the monarch fed.
Rich cates and floods of the purple grape:
And many a dancer's serpent shape
Steals slowly upon their amorous sights,
Or glances beneath the flaunting lights:
And fountains throw up their silver spray,
And cymbals clash, and the trumpets bray
Till the sounds in the arched roof are hung;
And words from the winding horn are flung:
And still the carvéd cups go round,
And revel and mirth and wine abound.

But Night has o'ertaken the fading Day;
And Music has raged her soul away:
The light in the Bacchanal's eye is dim;
And faint is the Georgian's wild love-hymn.
"Bring forth" (on a sudden spoke the king,
And hushed were the lords, loud-rioting), —
"Bring forth the vessels of silver and gold,
Which Nebuchadnezzar, my sire, of old
Ravished from proud Jerusalem;
And we and our queens will drink from them."

And the vessels are brought, of silver and gold,
Of stone, and of brass, and of iron old,
And of wood, whose sides like a bright gem shine,
And their mouths are all filled with the sparkling wine.
Hark! the king has proclaimed with a stately nod,
"Let a health be drunk out unto Baal, the god."
They shout and they drink: but the music moans,
And hushed are the reveller's loudest tones:
For a hand comes forth, and 't is seen by all
To write strange words on the plastered wall!
The mirth is over; the soft Greek flute
And the voices of women are low, — are mute;
The bacchanal's eyes are all staring wide;
And where 's the Assyrian's pomp of pride? —
That night the monarch was stung to pain:
That night Belshazzar, the king, was slain!

Many a silent age the prow
Of untiring Time, dividing
Years and days, and ever gliding
Onwards, has passed by: and now,
Where 's thy wealth of streets and towers?
Where thy gay and dazzling hours?
Where thy crowds of slaves, and things
That fed on the rich breath of kings?
Where thy laughter-crownéd times?
Thou art — what? — a breath, a fame,
In the shadow of thy name
Dwelling, like a ghost unseen;
Grander than if laurels green
Or the massy gold were spread,

Crown-like, upon thy great head:
Mighty in thy own undoing,
Drawing a fresh life from ruin
And eternal prophecy:
Thou art gone, but cannot die.
Like a splendor from the sky
Through the silent ether flung,
Like a hoar tradition hung
Glittering in the ear of Time,
Thou art, like a lamp sublime,
Telling from thy wave-worn tower
Where the raging floods have power,
How ruin lives, and how time flies,
And all that on the dial lies.

Bryan Waller Procter.

THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR.

FROM sunlight unto starlight trumpets told
Her king's command in Babylon the old,
From sunlight unto starlight west and east
A thousand satraps girt them for the feast,
And reined their chargers to the palace hall
Where King Belshazzar held high festival:
A pleasant palace under pleasant skies,
With cloistered courts and gilded galleries,
And gay kiosk and painted balustrade
For winter terraces and summer shade;
By court and terrace, minaret and dome,
Euphrates, rushing from his mountain home,

Rested his rage, and curbed his crested pride
To belt that palace with his bluest tide;
Broad-fronted bulls with chiselled feathers barred
In silent vigil keeping watch and ward,
Giants of granite wrought by cunning hand
Guard in the gate and frown upon the land:
Not summer's glow nor yellow autumn's glare
Pierced the broad tamarisks that blossomed there;
The moonbeam darting through their leafy screen
Lost half its silver in the softened green,
And fell with lessened lustre, broken light,
Tracing quaint arabesque of dark and white;
Or dimly tinting on the graven stones
The pictured annals of Chaldæan thrones.
There, from the rising to the setting day,
Birds of bright feather sang the light away,
And fountain waters on the palace-floor
Made even answer to the river's roar,
Rising in silver from the crystal well
And breaking into spangles as they fell;
Though now ye heard them not, for far along
Rang the broad chorus of the banquet song,
And sounds as gentle, echoes soft as these,
Died out of hearing from the revelries.

High on a throne of ivory and gold,
From crown to footstool clad in purple fold,
Lord of the east from sea to distant sea,
The king Belshazzar feasteth royally, —
And not that dreamer in the desert cave
Peopled his paradise with pomp as brave:

Vessels of silver, cups of crusted gold
Blush with a brighter red than all they hold;
Pendulous lamps like planets of the night
Flung on the diadems a fragrant light,
Or slowly swinging in the midnight sky
Gilded the ripples as they glided by;
And sweet and sweeter rang the cittern-string
Soft as the beating of a seraph's wing,
And swift and swifter in the measured dance
The tresses gather and the sandals glance,
And bright and brighter at the festal board
The flagons bubble and the wines are poured.

* * *

The last loud answer dies along the line,
The last light bubble bursts upon the wine,
His eager lips are on the jewelled brink, —
Hath the cup poison that he doubts to drink?
Is there a spell upon the sparkling gold,
That so his fevered fingers quit their hold?
Whom sees he where he gazes? what is there
Freezing his vision into fearful stare?
Follow his lifted arm and lighted eye,
And watch with them the wondrous mystery.

There cometh forth a hand, upon the stone
Graving the symbols of a speech unknown;
Fingers like mortal fingers, leaving there
The blank wall flashing characters of fear,
And still it glideth silently and slow,
And still beneath the spectral letters grow, —
Now the scroll endeth, now the seal is set,
The hand is gone, the record tarries yet.

As one who waits the warrant of his death,
With pale lips parted and with bridled breath,
They watch the sign and dare not turn to seek
Their fear reflected in their fellows' cheek,
But stand as statues where the life is none,
Half the jest uttered, half the laughter done,
Half the flask empty, half the flagon poured,
Each where the phantom found him at the board
Struck into silence, as December's arm
Curbs the quick ripples into crystal calm.

* * *

That night they slew him on his father's throne,
The deed unnoticed and the hand unknown;
Crownless and sceptreless Belshazzar lay,
A robe of purple, round a form of clay.

Edwin Arnold.

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

'TWAS here, beneath this dark and silent mound,
Where ages heap their nameless wrecks around,
That he, the last great king, before his fall,
Spread his famed feast, and lit his gorgeous hall.
Oh, ne'er in Babylon did blaze a sight
More richly grand, magnificently bright!
Bearing his crown, and dressed in robe of state,
High on his throne of gold Belshazzar sate.
In shining robes, and stretching far away,
Like billows quivering 'neath the sunset ray,
Chiefs, nobles stood, the red lamps flashing o'er

The golden chains and purple robes they wore;
In gilded galleries damsels, too, were seen,
Like night thick-set with stars, their jewels' sheen,
With rose-crowned locks, white hands, and radiant eyes,
Too fair for earth, too earthly for the skies.

The banquet speeds; the harp and psaltery sound,
And all is splendor, joy, enchantment round.
Wreathed with rich flowers, and crowned with rosy wine,
The golden cups from Salem's Temple shine.
Joined by his chiefs, the exulting monarch drinks,
Nor at thy voice, condemning conscience! shrinks,
But mocks the Hebrews' God, and, with vain boast,
Extols their Bel, and Heaven's unnumbered host.
'T was then, while pleasure held each heart in thrall,
A sudden light illumed the pillared hall;
No lamp, no earthly fire, could pour such beams, —
From sun or comet no such splendor streams.
Up sprang the king, and backward swayed the crowd
Mute was the harp, and hushed their laughter loud.
See! where in flame, yet dazzling, strong and clear,
That shadowy hand doth trace its words of fear!
It writes! — the king still stands with lips apart,
While terror's thrill runs shivering to his heart;
It writes! — and all veil there, in dread amaze,
Their dazzled eyes from that portentous blaze!

No sage was found to read those words of flame,
Till he, the exile, Salem's prophet came.

He stood before them all, with noble mien,
Bold as unshrinking, lofty as serene.
Age marked his brow, but in his deep clear eye
Still burned the fire of glorious days gone by.
So hushed each voice, that hall appeared a tomb, —
He stretched his hand, and spoke the monarch's doom!
Yes, on that night the foe, whose hosts in vain
Had fought so long those stately towers to gain,
Bowed deep Euphrates from his wonted course,
Poured to the city's heart with whirlwind force,
Slew the last king, — Assyria's rule was o'er!
And Babylon, the mighty, was no more!

Nicholas Michell.

THE TOWER OF BABEL.

FAR in the Eastern wild, begirt by sands,
A rugged pile, like some grim giant, stands:
Rude stones, that once, perchance, with beaming grace
Had glowed in statues, strew its circling base;
Though crushed the halls that Time's dread secrets keep,
Still, stage on stage, the crumbling platforms sweep:
High on its brow a dark mass rears its form,
Defying ages, mocking fire and storm:
Struck by a thousand lightnings, still 't is there,
As proud in ruin, haughty in despair.
O oldest fabric reared by hands of man!
Built ere Art's dawn on Europe's shores began!
Rome's mouldering shrines, and Tadmor's columns gray,

Beside yon mass, seem things of yesterday!
In breathless awe, in musing reverence, bow,
'T is hoary Babel glooms before you now;
The tower at which the Almighty's shaft was hurled,
The mystery, fear, and wonder of the world!

Nicholas Michell.

BELSHAZZAR.

MIDNIGHT came slowly sweeping on;
In silent rest lay Babylon.

But in the royal castle high
Red torches gleam and courtiers cry.

Belshazzar there in kingly hall
Is holding kingly festival.

The vassals sat in glittering line,
And emptied the goblets with glowing wine.

The goblets rattle, the choruses swell,
And it pleased the stiff-necked monarch well.

In the monarch's cheeks a wild fire glowed,
And the wine awoke his daring mood.

And, onward still by his madness spurred,
He blasphemes the Lord with a sinful word;

And he brazenly boasts, blaspheming wild,
While the servile courtiers cheered and smiled.

Quick the king spoke, while his proud glance burned,
Quickly the servant went and returned.

He bore on his head the vessels of gold,
Of Jehovah's temple the plunder bold.

With daring hand, in his frenzy grim,
The king seized a beaker and filled to the brim,

And drained to the dregs the sacred cup,
And foaming he cried, as he drank it up,

"Jehovah, eternal scorn I own
To thee. I am monarch of Babylon."

Scarce had the terrible blasphemy rolled
From his lips, ere the monarch at heart was cold.

The yelling laughter was hushed, and all
Was still as death in the royal hall.

And see! and see! on the white wall high
The form of a hand went slowly by,

And wrote, — and wrote, on the broad wall white,
Letters of fire, and vanished in night.

Pale as death, with a steady stare,
And with trembling knees, the king sat there;

The horde of slaves sat shuddering chill;
No word they spoke, but were deathlike still.

The Magians came, but of them all,
None could read the flame-script on the wall.

But that same night, in all his pride,
By the hands of his servants Belshazzar died.

Heinrich Heine. Tr. C. G. Leland.

Bagdad.

BAGDAD.

THOU, too, art fallen, Bagdad! City of Peace,
Thou too hast had thy day;
And loathsome Ignorance and brute Servitude
Pollute thy dwellings now,
Erst for the mighty and the wise renowned.
O, yet illustrious for remembered fame, —
Thy founder the Victorious, — and the pomp
Of Haroun, for whose name by blood defiled,
Yahia's, and the blameless Barmecides',
Genius hath wrought salvation, — and the years
When Science with the good Al-Maimon dwelt;
So one day may the Crescent from thy mosques
Be plucked by Wisdom, when the enlightened arm
Of Europe conquers to redeem the East!

Then Pomp and Pleasure dwelt within her walls;
The merchants of the East and of the West
Met in her arched bazaars;
All day the active poor
Showered a cool comfort o'er her thronging streets;
Labor was busy in her looms;
Through all her open gates
Long troops of laden camels lined the roads,
And Tigris bore upon his tameless stream
Armenian harvests to her multitudes.

Robert Southey.

JAFFÀR.

JAFFÀR, the Barmecide, the good Vizier,
The poor man's hope, the friend without a peer,
Jaffàr was dead, slain by a doom unjust;
And guilty Hàroun, sullen with mistrust
Of what the good and e'en the bad might say,
Ordained that no man living from that day
Should dare to speak his name on pain of death.
All Araby and Persia held their breath.

All but the brave Mondeer. He, proud to show
How far for love a grateful soul could go,
And facing death for very scorn and grief
(For his great heart wanted a great relief),
Stood forth in Bagdad, daily, in the square
Where once had stood a happy house; and there
Harangued the tremblers at the scymitar
On all they owed to the divine Jaffàr.

"Bring me this man," the caliph cried. The man
Was brought, — was gazed upon. The mutes began
To bind his arms. "Welcome, brave cords!" cried he;
"From bonds far worse Jaffàr delivered me;
From wants, from shames, from loveless household fears;
Made a man's eyes friends with delicious tears;
Restored me, — loved me, — put me on a par
With his great self. How can I pay Jaffàr?"

Hàroun, who felt that on a soul like this
The mightiest vengeance could but fall amiss,

Now deigned to smile, as one great lord of fate
Might smile upon another half as great.
He said, "Let worth grow frenzied, if it will;
The caliph's judgment shall be master still.
Go; and since gifts thus move thee, take this gem,
The richest in the Tartar's diadem,
And hold the giver as thou deemest fit."

"Gifts!" cried the friend. He took; and holding it
High towards the heavens, as though to meet his star,
Exclaimed, "This, too, I owe to thee, Jaffâr!"

Leigh Hunt.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free
In the silken sail of infancy,
The tide of time flowed back with me,
The forward-flowing tide of time;
And many a sheeny summer-morn,
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walléd gardens green and old;
True Mussulman was I and sworn,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling through
The low and blooméd foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadows in the blue:

By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
Gold glittering through lamplight dim,
And broidered sofas on each side;
In sooth it was a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear stemmed platans guard
The outlet, did I turn away
The boat-head down a broad canal
From the main river sluiced, where all
The sloping of the moonlit sward
Was damask-work, and deep inlay
Of braided blooms unmown, which crept
Adown to where the water slept.
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
My shallop through the star-strown calm,
Until another night in night
I entered, from the clearer light,
Imbowered vaults of pillared palm,
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb
Heavenward, were stayed beneath the dome
Of hollow boughs. A goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward; and the clear canal
Is rounded to as clear a lake.
From the green rivage many a fall
Of diamond rillets musical,
Through little crystal arches low
Down from the central fountain's flow
Fallen silver-chiming, seemed to shake
The sparkling flints beneath the prow,
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Above through many a bowery turn
A walk with vary-colored shells
Wandered engrained. On either side
All round about the fragrant marge
From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, Eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tiars, fed the time
With odor in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove
In closest coverture upsprung,
The living airs of middle night
Died round the bulbul as he sung;
Not he: but something which possessed
The darkness of the world, delight,
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,

Ceasing not, mingled, unrepressed,
Apart from place, withholding time,
But flattering the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots
Slumbered; the solemn palms were ranged
Above, unwooed of summer wind:
A sudden splendor from behind
Flushed all the leaves with rich gold-green,
And, flowing rapidly between
Their interspaces, counterchanged
The level lake with diamond plots
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
Grew darker from that under-flame:
So, leaping lightly from the boat,
With silver anchor left afloat,
In marvel whence that glory came
Upon me, as in sleep I sank
In cool soft turf upon the bank,
Entrancéd with that place and time,
So worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence through the garden I was drawn,—
A realm of pleasance, many a mound,

And many a shadow-checkered lawn
Full of the city's stilly sound,
And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round
The stately cedar, tamarisks,
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks,
Graven with emblems of the time,
In honor of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazéd vision unawares
From the long alley's latticed shade
Emerged, I came upon the great
Pavilion of the Caliphat.
Right to the carven cedarn doors,
Flung inward over spangled floors,
Broad-baséd flights of marble stairs
Ran up with golden balustrade,
After the fashion of the time,
And humor of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The fourscore windows all alight
As with the quintessence of flame,
A million tapers flaring bright
From twisted silvers looked to shame
The hollow-vaulted dark, and streamed
Upon the moonéd domes aloof
In inmost Bagdat, till there seemed
Hundreds of crescents on the roof
Of night new-risen, that marvellous time

To celebrate the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancédly
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
Serene with argent-lidded eyes
Amorous, and lashes like to rays
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
Tresséd with redolent ebony,
In many a dark delicious curl,
Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone;
The sweetest lady of the time,
Well worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,
Pure silver, underpropt a rich
Throne of the massive ore, from which
Down-drooped, in many a floating fold,
Engarlanded and diapered
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirred
With merriment of kingly pride,
Sole star of all that place and time.
I saw him in his golden prime,
The good Haroun Alraschid!

Alfred Tennyson.

BAGDAD.

STILL on we press, and now the ruddy beam
To amber turns swift Tigris' arrowy stream,
Shines on famed Bagdad's walls, and bathes with fire
Each gilded dome, and crescent-mounted spire.
Romantic Bagdad! name to childhood dear,
Awaking terror's thrill and pity's tear;
For there the sorcerer gloomed, the genii dwelt,
And Love and Worth to good Al Rashid knelt;
Prince of the Thousand Tales! whose glorious reign
So brightly shines in fancy's fair domain!
Whose noble deeds still Arab minstrels sing,
Who rivalled all but Gallia's knightly king.
Yonder where fountains gush and yew-trees weep,
Watch o'er his harem-queen doth Azrael keep;
Yes, morn's rich hues illume that sacred pile,
Like beams shed down by some blest angel's smile,—
Where fair Zobeida, shrined in odor, lies:
Her soul long since in starry Paradise.

Nicholas Michell.

Desert, the Assyrian.

KUBLEH;

A STORY OF THE ASSYRIAN DESERT.

THE black-eyed children of the Desert drove
Their flocks together at the set of sun.
The tents were pitched: the weary camels bent

Their suppliant necks, and knelt upon the sand;
The hunters quartered by the kindled fires
The wild boars of the Tigris they had slain,
And all the stir and sound of evening ran
Throughout the Shammar camp. The dewy air
Bore its full burden of confused delight
Across the flowery plain, and while, afar,
The snows of Koordish mountains in the ray
Flashed roseate amber, Nimroud's ancient mound
Rose broad and black against the burning West.
The shadows deepened, and the stars came out
Sparkling in violet ether; one by one
Glimmered the ruddy camp-fires on the plain,
And shapes of steed and horseman moved among
The dusky tents with shout and jostling cry,
And neigh and restless prancing. Children ran
To hold the thongs, while every rider drove
His quivering spear in the earth, and by his door
Tethered the horse he loved. In midst of all
Stood Shammeriyah, whom they dared not touch,—
The foal of wondrous Kubleh, to the Sheik
A dearer wealth than all his Georgian girls.
But when their meal was o'er,—when the red fires
Blazed brighter, and the dogs no longer bayed,—
When Shammar hunters with the boys sat down
To cleanse their bloody knives, came Alimàr,
The poet of the tribe, whose songs of love
Are sweeter than Bassora's nightingales,—
Whose songs of war can fire the Arab blood
Like war itself: who knows not Alimàr?
Then asked the men: "O poet, sing of Kubleh!"

And boys laid down the knives half burnished, saying,
"Tell us of Kubleh, whom we never saw, —
Of wondrous Kubleh!" Closer flocked the group
With eager eyes about the flickering fire,
While Alimàr, beneath the Assyrian stars,
Sang to the listening Arabs:

"God is great!
O Arabs, never yet since Mahmoud rode
The sands of Yemen, and by Mecca's gate
The wingéd steed bestrode, whose mane of fire
Blazed up the zenith, when, by Allah called,
He bore the Prophet to the walls of heaven,
Was like to Kubleh, Sofuk's wondrous mare:
Not all the milk-white barbs, whose hoofs dashed flame
In Bagdad's stables from the marble floor —
Who, swathed in purple housings, pranced in state
The gay bazaars, by great Al-Raschid backed:
Not the wild charger of Mongolian breed
That went o'er half the world with Tamerlane:
Nor yet those flying coursers, long ago
From Ormuz brought by swarthy Indian grooms
To Persia's kings — the foals of sacred mares,
Sired by the fiery stallions of the sea!

"Who ever told, in all the Desert Land,
The many deeds of Kubleh? Who can tell
Whence came she, whence her like shall come again?
O Arabs, like a tale of Scherezade
Heard in the camp, when javelin shafts are tried
On the hot eve of battle, is her story.

"Far in the Southern sands, the hunters say,
Did Sofuk find her, by a lonely palm.
The well had dried; her fierce, impatient eye
Glared red and sunken, and her slight young limbs
Were lean with thirst. He checked his camel's pace,
And while it knelt, untied the water-skin,
And when the wild mare drank, she followed him.
Thence none but Sofuk might the saddle gird
Upon her back, or clasp the brazen gear
About her shining head, that brooked no curb
From even him; for she, alike, was royal.

"Her form was lighter, in its shifting grace,
Than some impassioned Almée's, when the dance
Unbinds her scarf, and golden anklets gleam
Through floating drapery, on the buoyant air.
Her light, free head was ever held aloft:
Between her slender and transparent ears
The silken forelock tossed; her nostril's arch,
Thin-drawn, in proud and pliant beauty spread,
Snuffing the desert winds. Her glossy neck
Curved to the shoulder like an eagle's wing,
And all her matchless lines of flank and limb
Seemed fashioned from the flying shapes of air
By hands of lightning. When the war-shouts rang
From tent to tent, her keen and restless eye
Shone like a blood-red ruby, and her neigh
Rang wild and sharp above the clash of spears.

"The tribes of Tigris and the Desert knew her:
Sofuk before the Shammar bands she bore

To meet the dread Jebours, who waited not
To bid her welcome; and the savage Koord,
Chased from his bold irruption on the plain,
Has seen her hoof-prints in his mountain snow.
Lithe as the dark-eyed Syrian gazelle,
O'er ledge and chasm and barren steep, amid
The Sindjar hills, she ran the wild ass down.
Through many a battle's thickest brunt she stormed,
Reeking with sweat and dust, and fetlock deep
In curdling gore. When hot and lurid haze
Stifled the crimson sun, she swept before
The whirling sand-spout, till her gusty mane
Flared in its vortex, while the camels lay
Groaning and helpless on the fiery waste.

"The tribes of Taurus and the Caspian knew her:
The Georgian chiefs have heard her trumpet-neigh
Before the walls of Tiflis. Pines that grow
On ancient Caucasus have harbored her,
Sleeping by Sofuk, in their spicy gloom.
The surf of Trebizond has bathed her flanks,
When from the shore she saw the white-sailed bark
That brought him home from Stamboul. Never yet,
O Arabs, never yet was like to Kubleh!

"And Sofuk loved her. She was more to him
Than all his snowy-bosomed odalisques.
For many years, beside his tent she stood,
The glory of the tribe.
"At last she died;
Died, while the fire was yet in all her limbs, —

Died for the life of Sofuk, whom she loved.
The base Jebours — on whom be Allah's curse! —
Came on his path, when far from any camp,
And would have slain him, but that Kubleh sprang
Against the javelin-points and bore them down,
And gained the open desert. Wounded sore,
She urged her light limbs into maddening speed
And made the wind a laggard. On and on
The red sand slid beneath her, and behind
Whirled in a swift and cloudy turbulence,
As when some star of Eblis downward hurled
By Allah's bolt, sweeps with its burning hair
The waste of Darkness. On and on, the bleak,
Bare ridges rose before her, came and passed;
And every flying leap with fresher blood
Her nostril stained, till Sofuk's brow and breast
Were flecked with crimson foam. He would have turned
To save his treasure, though himself were lost,
But Kubleh fiercely snapped the brazen rein.
At last, when through her spent and quivering frame
The sharp throes ran, our distant tents arose,
And with a neigh, whose shrill excess of joy
O'ercame its agony, she stopped and fell.
The Shammar men came round her as she lay,
And Sofuk raised her head and held it close
Against his breast. Her dull and glazing eye
Met his, and with a shuddering gasp she died.
Then like a child's his bursting grief made way
In passionate tears, and with him all the tribe
Wept for the faithful mare.

"They dug her grave
Amid Al-Hather's marbles, where she lies
Buried with ancient kings; and since that time
Was never seen, and will not be again,
O Arabs, though the world be doomed to live
As many moons as count the desert sands,
The like of wondrous Kubleh. God is great!"

Bayard Taylor.

Euphrates, the River.

THE EUPHRATES.

BRIGHT stream! whose wavelets flowed through Eden's bowers,
Watering its trees, and incense-breathing flowers,
Soothing with murmurs Eve's enraptured ear,
And all her heavenly charms reflecting clear:
River! whose mountain-born and rapid flood
Swept Shinar's plain, where sky-topped Babel stood,
Wound, like a huge snake glittering in the sun,
Through Earth's first city, mighty Babylon!
And saw, along those wild and palmy banks,
The first dread conqueror range his blood-stained ranks!
All hail, Euphrates! stream of hoary time,
Fair as majestic, sacred as sublime!
What thoughts of Earth's young morning dost thou bring!

What hallowed memories to thy bright waves cling! —
The bowers are crushed where Eve in beauty shone,
The woods are wastes, the towers are overthrown;
Ages have whelmed, beneath their ruthless tide,
Assyria's glory and Chaldæa's pride:
But thou, exhaustless river! rollest still,
Raising thy lordly voice by vale and hill;
Sparkling through palm-groves, washing empires' graves,
And gladdening thirsty deserts with thy waves;
Mirroring the heavens, that know no change, like thee,
A glittering dream, a bright-leaved history!

Nicholas Michell.

THE EUPHRATES.

THE hour is come! the hour is come! With voice
Heard in thy inmost soul, I summon thee,
Cyrus, the Lord's anointed! And thou river,
That flow'st exulting in thy proud approach
To Babylon, beneath whose shadowy walls
And brazen gates, and gilded palaces,
And groves that gleam with marble obelisks,
Thy azure bosom shall repose, with lights
Fretted and checkered like the starry heavens:
I do arrest thee in thy stately course,
By Him that poured thee from thine ancient fountain,
And sent thee forth, even at the birth of time,
One of his holy streams, to lave the mounts
Of Paradise. Thou hear'st me: thou dost check
Abrupt thy waters, as the Arab chief
His headlong squadrons. Where the unobserved

Yet toiling Persian breaks the ruining mound,
I see thee gather thy tumultuous strength:
And, through the deep and roaring Naharmalcha,
Roll on, as proudly conscious of fulfilling
The Omnipotent command! While, far away,
The lake, that slept but now so calm, nor moved
Save by the rippling moonshine, heaves on high
Its foaming surface, like a whirlpool gulf,
And boils and whitens with the unwonted tide.

Henry Hart Milman.

THE EUPHRATES.

THERE on Euphrates, in its ancient course,
Three beauteous rivers rolled their confluent force,
Whose streams, while man the blissful garden trod,
Adorned the earthly Paradise of God.
But since he fell, within their triple bound
Fenced a lone region of forbidden ground;
Meeting at once, where high athwart their bed
Repulsive rocks a curving barrier spread,
The embattled floods, by mutual whirlpools crossed,
In hoary foam and surging mist were lost;
Thence, like an Alpine cataract of snow,
White down the precipice they dashed below;
There in tumultuous billows broken wide,
They spent their rage, and yoked their fourfold tide;
Through one majestic channel, calm and free,
The sister-rivers sought the parent-sea.

James Montgomery.

Hit (*Ait*).

THE BITUMINOUS LAKE.

WHAT sound is borne on the wind?
Is it the storm that shakes
The thousand oaks of the forest?
But Thalaba's long locks
Flow down his shoulders moveless, and the wind
In his loose mantle raises not a fold.
Is it the river's roar
Dashed down some rocky descent?
Along the level plain
Euphrates glides unheard,
What sound disturbs the night,
Loud as the summer forest in the storm,
As the river that roars among rocks?

And what the heavy cloud
That hangs upon the vale,
Thick as the mist o'er a well-watered plain
Settling at evening when the cooler air
Lets its day-vapors fall;
Black as the sulphur-cloud,
That through Vesuvius, or from Hecla's mouth,
Rolls up, ascending from the infernal fires.

From Ait's bitumen-lake
That heavy cloud ascends;
That everlasting roar

From where its gushing springs
Boil their black billows up.
Silent the Arabian youth,
Along the verge of that wide lake,
Followed Mohareb's way,
Toward a ridge of rocks that banked its side.
There from a cave, with torrent force,
And everlasting roar,
The black bitumen rolled.
The moonlight lay upon the rocks;
Their crags were visible,
The shade of jutting cliffs,
And where broad lichens whitened some smooth spot,
And where the ivy hung
Its flowing tresses down.
A little way within the cave
The moonlight fell, glossing the sable tide
That gushed tumultuous out;
A little way it entered, then the rock
Arching its entrance, and the winding way,
Darkened the unseen depths.

No eye of mortal man,
If unenabled by enchanted spell,
Had pierced those fearful depths;
For mingling with the roar
Of the portentous torrent, oft were heard
Shrieks, and wild yells that scared
The brooding Eagle from her midnight nest.
The affrighted countrymen
Call it the Mouth of Hell;

And ever when their way leads near,
They hurry with averted eyes,
And dropping their beads fast,
Pronounce the Holy Name.

Robert Southey.

Nineveh.

THE BURDEN OF NINEVEH.

IN our Museum galleries
To-day I lingered o'er the prize
Dead Greece vouchsafes to living eyes, —
Her Art forever in fresh wise
From hour to hour rejoicing me.
Sighing I turned at last to win
Once more the London dirt and din;
And as I made the swing-door spin
And issued, they were hoisting in
A winged beast from Nineveh.

A human face the creature wore,
And hoofs behind and hoofs before,
And flanks with dark runes fretted o'er.
'T was bull, 't was mitred Minotaur,
A dead disbowelled mystery;
The mummy of a buried faith
Stark from the charnel without scathe,
Its wings stood for the light to bathe, —

Such fossil cerements as might swathe
The very corpse of Nineveh.

The print of its first rush-wrapping,
Wound ere it dried, still ribbed the thing.
What song did the brown maidens sing,
From purple mouths alternating,
When that was woven languidly?
What vows, what rites, what prayers preferred,
What songs has the strange image heard?
In what blind vigil stood interred
For ages, till an English word
Broke silence first at Nineveh?

Oh, when upon each sculptured court,
Where even the wind might not resort, —
O'er which Time passed, of like import
With the wild Arab boys at sport, —
A living face looked in to see:
Oh, seemed it not — the spell once broke —
As though the carven warriors woke,
As though the shaft the string forsook,
The cymbals clashed, the chariots shook,
And there was life in Nineveh?

On London stones our sun anew
The beast's recovered shadow threw.
(No shade that plague of darkness knew,
No light, no shade, while older grew
By ages the old earth and sea.)
Lo thou! could all thy priests have shown

Such proof to make thy godhead known?
From their dead Past thou liv'st alone;
And still thy shadow is thine own
Even as of yore in Nineveh.

That day whereof we keep record,
When near thy city-gates the Lord
Sheltered his Jonah with a gourd,
This sun (I said), here present, poured
Even thus this shadow that I see.
This shadow has been shed the same
From sun and moon, — from lamps which came
For prayer, — from fifteen days of flame,
The last, while smouldered to a name
Sardanapalus' Nineveh.

Within thy shadow, haply, once
Sennacherib has knelt, whose sons
Smote him between the altar-stones;
Or pale Semiramis her zones
Of gold, her incense brought to thee,
In love for grace, in war for aid: . . . .
Ay, and who else? . . . . till 'neath thy shade
Within his trenches newly made
Last year the Christian knelt and prayed —
Not to thy strength — in Nineveh.

Now, thou poor god, within this hall
Where the blank windows blind the wall
From pedestal to pedestal,
The kind of light shall on thee fall

Which London takes the day to be:
While school-foundations in the act
Of holiday, three files compact,
Shall learn to view thee as a fact
Connected with that zealous tract:
"Rome, — Babylon and Nineveh."

Deemed they of this, those worshippers,
When, in some mythic chain of verse
Which man shall not again rehearse,
The faces of thy ministers
Yearned pale with bitter ecstasy?
Greece, Egypt, Rome, — did any god
Before whose feet men knelt unshod
Deem that in this unblest abode
Another scarce more unknown god
Should house with him, from Nineveh?

Ah! in what quarries lay the stone
From which this pygmy pile has grown,
Unto man's need how long unknown,
Since thy vast temples, court and cone,
Rose far in desert history?
Ah! what is here that does not lie
All strange to thine awakened eye?
Ah! what is here can testify
(Save that dumb presence of the sky)
Unto thy day and Nineveh?

Why, of those mummies in the room
Above, there might indeed have come

One out of Egypt to thy home,
An alien. Nay, but were not some
Of these thine own "antiquity"?
And now, — they and their gods and thou
All relics here together, — now
Whose profit? whether bull or cow,
Isis or Ibis, who or how,
Whether of Thebes or Nineveh?

The consecrated metals found,
And ivory tablets underground,
Winged teraphim and creatures crowned,
When air and daylight filled the mound,
Fell into dust immediately.
And even as these, the images
Of awe and worship, — even as these, —
So, smitten with the sun's increase,
Her glory mouldered and did cease
From immemorial Nineveh.

The day her builders made their halt,
Those cities of the lake of salt
Stood firmly 'stablished without fault,
Made proud with pillars of basalt,
With sardonyx and porphyry.
The day that Jonah bore abroad
To Nineveh the voice of God,
A brackish lake lay in his road,
Where erst Pride fixed her sure abode,
As then in royal Nineveh.

The day when he, Pride's lord and Man's,
Showed all the kingdoms at a glance
To Him before whose countenance
The years recede, the years advance,
And said, Fall down and worship me: —
Mid all the pomp beneath that look,
Then stirred there, haply, some rebuke,
Where to the wind the salt pools shook,
And in those tracts, of life forsook,
That knew thee not, O Nineveh!

Delicate harlot! On thy throne
Thou with a world beneath thee prone
In state for ages sat'st alone;
And needs were years and lustres flown
Ere strength of man could vanquish thee:
Whom even thy victor foes must bring,
Still royal, among maids that sing
As with doves' voices, taboring
Upon their breasts, unto the King, —
A kingly conquest, Nineveh!

Here woke my thought. The wind's slow sway
Had waxed; and like the human play
Of scorn that smiling spreads away,
The sunshine shivered off the day:
The callous wind, it seemed to me,
Swept up the shadow from the ground:
And pale as whom the Fates astound,
The god forlorn stood winged and crowned:
Within I knew the cry lay bound
Of the dumb soul of Nineveh.

And as I turned, my sense half shut
Still saw the crowds of kerb and rut
Go past as marshalled to the strut
Of rank in gypsum quaintly cut.
It seemed in one same pageantry
They followed forms which had been erst;
To pass, till on my sight should burst
That future of the best or worst
When some may question which was first,
Of London or of Nineveh.

For as that Bull-god once did stand
And watched the burial-clouds of sand,
Till these at last without a hand
Rose o'er his eyes, another land,
And blinded him with destiny: —
So may he stand again; till now,
In ships of unknown sail and prow,
Some tribe of the Australian plough
Bear him afar, — a relic now
Of London, not of Nineveh!

Or it may chance indeed that when
Man's age is hoary among men, —
His centuries threescore and ten, —
His furthest childhood shall seem then
More clear than later times may be:
Who, finding in this desert place
This form, shall hold us for some race
That walked not in Christ's lowly ways,
But bowed its pride and vowed its praise
Unto the God of Nineveh.

The smile rose first, — anon drew nigh
The thought: Those heavy wings spread high
So sure of flight, which do not fly;
That set gaze never on the sky;
  Those scriptured flanks it cannot see;
Its crown a brow-contracting load:
Its planted feet which trust the sod
(So grew the image as I trod):
O Nineveh, was this thy God, —
  Thine also, mighty Nineveh?

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

NINEVEH.

MEET is the hour thy dreary site to see,
City of darkness, vanished Nineveh!
To trace the mounds that mark the barren plain,
Where, veiled from view, tombed wonders yet remain!
Yes, Ninus' palace, where all glories shone,
And rose at once his sepulchre and throne;
Thy far-encircling walls, and thousand towers,
Baffling for ages Asia's leaguered powers;
The streets where princes drove their glittering cars,
And Traffic's sons were countless as the stars;
Arask's vast shrine, where that dread warrior died,
Whose banded myriads — boastful slaves of pride —
Fell in one night, when Heaven's own lightnings came,
And Death's pale angel waved her sword of flame,
Are now but heaps, with rude wrecks scattered o'er,
That bear a language writ by man no more;

Where scarce the hermit wild-flower deigns to blow,
But coarse rank grass and plants of poison grow,
And jackals lurk, and hooded serpents glide, —
Monarchs! approach ye here, and bow your pride!
Empires! so strong to-day, like change await!
And, laurelled conquerors! weep, and read your fate!

Nicholas Michell.

Orfah.

THE LEAP OF ROUSHAN BEG.

MOUNTED on Kyrat strong and fleet,
His chestnut steed with four white feet,
Roushan Beg, called Kurroglou,
Son of the road and bandit chief,
Seeking refuge and relief,
Up the mountain pathway flew.

Such was Kyrat's wondrous speed,
Never yet could any steed
Reach the dust-cloud in his course.
More than maiden, more than wife,
More than gold and next to life
Roushan the Robber loved his horse.

In the land that lies beyond
Erzeroum and Trebizond,
Garden-girt his fortress stood;

Plundered khan, or caravan
Journeying north from Koordistan,
  Gave him wealth and wine and food.

Seven hundred and fourscore
Men at arms his livery wore,
  Did his bidding night and day.
Now, through regions all unknown,
He was wandering, lost, alone,
  Seeking without guide his way.

Suddenly the pathway ends,
Sheer the precipice descends,
  Loud the torrent roars unseen;
Thirty feet from side to side
Yawns the chasm; on air must ride
  He who crosses this ravine.

Following close in his pursuit,
At the precipice's foot,
  Reyhan the Arab of Orfah
Halted with his hundred men,
Shouting upward from the glen,
  "La Illáh illa Alláh!"

Gently Roushan Beg caressed
Kyrat's forehead, neck, and breast;
  Kissed him upon both his eyes;
Sang to him in his wild way,
As upon the topmost spray
  Sings a bird before it flies.

"O my Kyrat, O my steed,
Round and slender as a reed,
Carry me this peril through!
Satin housings shall be thine,
Shoes of gold, O Kyrat mine,
O thou soul of Kurroglou!

"Soft thy skin as silken skein,
Soft as woman's hair thy mane,
Tender are thine eyes and true;
All thy hoofs like ivory shine,
Polished bright; O, life of mine.
Leap, and rescue Kurroglou!"

Kyrat, then, the strong and fleet,
Drew together his four white feet,
Paused a moment on the verge,
Measured with his eye the space,
And into the air's embrace
Leaped as leaps the ocean surge.

As the ocean surge o'er sand
Bears a swimmer safe to land,
Kyrat safe his rider bore;
Rattling down the deep abyss
Fragments of the precipice
Rolled like pebbles on a shore.

Roushan's tasselled cap of red
Trembled not upon his head,
Careless sat he and upright;

Neither hand nor bridle shook,
Nor his head he turned to look,
As he galloped out of sight.

Flash of harness in the air,
Seen a moment like the glare
Of a sword drawn from its sheath;
Thus the phantom horseman passed,
And the shadow that he cast
Leaped the cataract underneath.

Reyhan the Arab held his breath
While this vision of life and death
Passed above him. "Allahu!"
Cried he. "In all Koordistan
Lives there not so brave a man
As this Robber Kurroglou!"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Seleucia and Ctesiphon.

SELEUCIA AND CTESIPHON.

TWO cities moulder here — and can it be,
Seleucia! Ctesiphon! we gaze on ye?
Boast of the Greek, and pride of Parthia's kings,
How has your glory flown on eagle wings!
The thrones of ivory, and the myrtle bowers,

The harems, full of Beauty's choicest flowers,
The burning censers of the Magian train,
The bright-plumed hosts careering on the plain, —
Where are they now? The lowly turf I tread,
On which the daisy lifts its yellow head,
Veils the past scene of splendor, — Genii, come!
From cave and dell, your green and haunted home,
Shed memory's tear, put wreaths of cypress on,
And mourn Seleucia! weep for Ctesiphon!

By ruin struck, and yet unbowed by years,
One noble relic on this waste appears:
See! where yon lofty-raised stupendous wall
Nods o'er the desert mounds, but will not fall;
Beneath the mighty arch we wander slow,
On sand-heaped floors the thorn and thistle grow.
And here dwelt Khosru, Persia's tasteful king,
Lapped in each joy that power and splendor bring;
Here blazed that throne, all formed of pearls and gold,
Like sunset cloud round Mythra's chariot rolled;
Here Indian slaves knelt down in glittering rows,
And Tyrian couches wooed to cool repose;
Breathed from a thousand urns each choice perfume,
Till fainting sweetness filled each dazzling room.
Here Barbud's hand the harp-strings swept along,
Till all the trembling air seemed steeped with song.
The soul in dreams half thought her in the skies,
Mistaking earth for star-bright Paradise.

Nicholas Michell.

ARABIA.

INTRODUCTORY.

ARABIA.

THENCE, southward bending to the Orient, laves
The Erythrean, with its ocean waves,
Of all earth's shores the fairest richest strand,
And noblest tribes possess that happy land.
First of all wonders, still forever soar
Sweet clouds of fragrance from that breathing shore.
The myrrh, the odorous cane, the cassia there,
And ever-ripening incense balms the air.
For in that land the all-ruling King on high
Set free young Bacchus from his close-bound thigh;
Broke odors from each tree at that fair birth,
And one unbounded fragrance filled the earth.
'Neath golden fleeces stooped the o'er-laden flocks,
And streams came bounding from the living rocks.
Birds from strange isles, and many an untrod shore,
With leaves of cinnamon, were flying o'er.

Loose from his shoulders hung the fawn-skin down,
In his fair hair was wreathed the ivy-crown:
Ruddy his lips with wine. He shook his wand,
Smiling, and wealth o'erflowed the gifted land.
Whence still the fields with liquid incense teem,
The hills with gold, with odors every stream;
And in their pride her sumptuous sons enfold
Their limbs in soft attire and robes of gold.

Dionysius. Tr. H. H. Milman.

HE WHO DIED AT AZIM.

HE who died at Azim sends
This to comfort all his friends:

Faithful friends! It lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow;
And ye say, "Abdallah 's dead!"
Weeping at the feet and head.
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your sighs and prayers;
Yet I smile and whisper this,—
"I am not the thing you kiss:
Cease your tears, and let it lie;
It was mine, it is not I."

Sweet friends! what the women lave,
For the last sleep of the grave,
Is a hut which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,

Is a cage from which, at last,
Like a bird, my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room,
The wearer, not the garb, — the plume
Of the eagle, not the bars
That kept him from those splendid stars.

Loving friends! Be wise and dry
Straightway every weeping eye:
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a single tear.
'T is an empty sea-shell, — one
Qut of which the pearl has gone:
The shell is broken, it lies there;
The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.
'T is an earthen jar, whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid
That treasure of his treasury,
A mind that loved him: let it lie!
Let the shards be earth's once more,
Since the gold is in his store!

Allah glorious! Allah good!
Now thy world is understood;
Now the long, long wonder ends;
Yet ye weep, my foolish friends,
While the man whom ye call dead,
In unspoken bliss, instead,
Lives and loves you; lost, 't is true,
For the light that shines for you:
But in the light ye cannot see

Of undisturbed felicity, —
In a perfect paradise,
And a life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! But not farewell;
Where I am, ye too shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's worth, a little space.
When ye come where I have stepped,
Ye will wonder why ye wept;
Ye will know, by true love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain, —
Sunshine still must follow rain;
Only not at death, — for death,
Now we know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life centre.

Be ye certain all seems love,
Viewed from Allah's throne above;
Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home!
La il Allah! Allah la!
O love divine! O love alway!

He who died at Azim gave
This to those who made his grave.

From the Arabic. Tr. E. Arnold.

SHEIK HUIABI'S CREED.

'TIS Allah governs this terrestrial ball,
To all gives laws, as he gave life to all!
He rules the unnumbered circles bright with bliss
That from the ends of heaven send forth their beams:
He rules the space, the infinite abyss,
The undefined and wandering ether streams,
Where thousand, thousand stars and planets play, —
What are the laws that guide them on their way?
They are no perishable records, — laws
Written with pen and ink. No! Allah spreads
The golden roll of nature: o'er our heads
Opens his glorious volume and withdraws
The veil of ignorance: read the letters there,
That is the blazing, burning record, where
The letters are not idle lines, but things:
Read there the name of Allah, dazzling bright,
In works of eloquence and words of light!
Shut, shut all other books; and if thy soul,
Borne upward on devotion's angel-wings,
Soar to the heaven, from earth and earth's control,
Thou shalt perceive, — shalt know the Deity.
His splendors then shall burst upon thine eye,
An effluence of noontide round thee roll,
Thy spirit glad with light and love; — a sun
Of pure philosophy to lead thee on.

From the Khersonida. Tr. J. Bowring.

BEDOUIN SONG.

FROM the Desert I come to thee
On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
In the speed of my desire.
Under thy window I stand,
And the midnight hears my cry:
I love thee, I love but thee,
With a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

Look from thy window and see
My passion and my pain;
I lie on the sands below,
And I faint in thy disdain.
Let the night-winds touch thy brow
With the heat of my burning sigh,
And melt thee to hear the vow
Of a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

My steps are nightly driven,
By the fever in my breast,

To hear from thy lattice breathed
The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
The love that shall fade no more
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

Bayard Taylor.

MAHOMET'S SONG.

SEE the rocky spring,
Clear as joy,
Like a sweet star gleaming!
O'er the clouds, he
In his youth was cradled
By good spirits,
'Neath the bushes in the cliffs.

Fresh with youth,
From the cloud he dances
Down upon the rocky pavement;
Thence, exulting,
Leaps to heaven.

For a while he dallies
Round the summit,
Through its little channels chasing

Motley pebbles round and round;
Quick, then, like determined leader,
Hurries all his brother streamlets
Off with him.

There, all round him in the vale,
Flowers spring up beneath his footstep,
And the meadow
Wakes to feel his breath.
But him holds no shady vale,
No cool blossoms,
Which around his knees are clinging,
And with loving eyes entreating
Passing notice; — on he speeds
Winding snake-like.

Social brooklets
Add their waters. Now he rolls
O'er the plain in silvery splendor,
And the plain his splendor borrows;
And the rivulets from the plain,
And the brooklets from the hillsides
All are shouting to him: Brother,
Brother, take thy brothers too,
Take us to thy ancient Father,
To the everlasting ocean,
Who e'en now with outstretched arms,
Waits for us, —
Arms outstretched, alas! in vain
To embrace his longing ones;
For the greedy sand devours us,

Or the burning sun above us
Sucks our life-blood; or some hillock
Hems us into ponds. Ah! brother,
Take thy brothers from the plain,
Take thy brothers from the hillsides
With thee, to our Sire with thee!

Come ye all, then!
Now, more proudly,
On he swells; a countless race, they
Bear their glorious prince aloft!
On he rolls triumphantly,
Giving names to countries. Cities
Spring to being 'neath his foot.

Onward, with incessant roaring,
See! he passes proudly by
Flaming turrets, marble mansions,
Creatures of his fulness all.

Cedar houses bears this Atlas
On his giant shoulders. Rustling,
Flapping in the playful breezes,
Thousand flags about his head are
Telling of his majesty.

And so bears he all his brothers,
And his treasures, and his children,
To their Sire, all joyous roaring,
Pressing to his mighty heart.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Tr. J. S. Dwight.

ARAB PRAYER.

"LA illah il' Allah!" the muezzin's call
Comes from the minaret, slim and tall,
That looks o'er the distant city's wall.

"La illah il' Allah!" the Faithful heed,
With God and the Prophet this hour to plead:
Whose ear is open to hear their need.

The sun is sunken; no vapor mars
The path of his going with dusky bars.
The silent desert awaits the stars.

I bend the knee and I stretch the hand,
I strike my forehead upon the sand,
And I pray aloud, that He understand.

Not for my father, for he is dead;
Not in my wandering brothers' stead,—
For myself alone I bow the head.

God is Great, and God is Just:
He knoweth the hearts of the children of dust,—
He is the Helper; in him I trust.

My sword is keen and my arm is strong
With the sense of unforgotten wrong,
And the hate that waits and watches long.

God, let me wait for year on year,
But let the hour at last appear,
When Vengeance makes my honor clear.

Once let me strike till he is slain;
His blood will cleanse my sabre's stain,
And I shall stand erect again.

Till then, I wander to and fro,
Wide as the desert whirlwinds go,
And seek, by the sun and stars, my foe.

Better than Stamboul's courts of gold,
Whose harems the Georgian girls infold,
Whiter than snow, but not so cold;

Better than Bagdad's garden bowers,
Or fountains that play among Persian flowers;
Better than all delights and powers,

The deed God's justice will abide, —
The stern atonement, long denied,
That righteous Vengeance gives to Pride.

Bayard Taylor.

THE ARAB TO THE PALM.

NEXT to thee, O fair gazelle,
O Beddowee girl, beloved so well;

Next to the fearless Nedjidee,
Whose fleetness shall bear me again to thee;

Next to ye both I love the Palm,
With his leaves of beauty, his fruit of balm;

Next to ye both I love the Tree
Whose fluttering shadow wraps us three
With love, and silence, and mystery!

Our tribe is many, our poets vie
With any under the Arab sky;
Yet none can sing of the Palm but I.

The marble minarets that begem
Cairo's citadel-diadem
Are not so light as his slender stem.

He lifts his leaves in the sunbeam's glance
As the Almehs lift their arms in dance, —

A slumberous motion, a passionate sign,
That works in the cells of the blood like wine.

Full of passion and sorrow is he,
Dreaming where the beloved may be.

And when the warm south-winds arise,
He breathes his longing in fervid sighs, —

Quickening odors, kisses of balm,
That drop in the lap of his chosen palm.

The sun may flame and the sands may stir,
But the breath of his passion reaches her.

O Tree of Love, by that love of thine,
Teach me how I shall soften mine!

Give me the secret of the sun,
Whereby the wooed is ever won!

If I were a king, O stately Tree,
A likeness, glorious as might be,
In the court of my palace I 'd build for thee!

With a shaft of silver, burnished bright,
And leaves of beryl and malachite;

With spikes of golden bloom ablaze,
And fruits of topaz and chrysoprase:

And there the poets, in thy praise,
Should night and morning frame new lays, —

New measures sung to tunes divine;
But none, O Palm, should equal mine!

Bayard Taylor.

ARABIA.

Aden.

SOLIMA.

AN ARABIAN ECLOGUE WRITTEN IN 1768.

YE maids of Aden! hear a loftier tale
Than e'er was sung in meadow, bower, or dale.
The smiles of Abelah, and Maia's eyes,
Where beauty plays, and love in slumber lies;
The fragrant hyacinths of Azza's hair,
That wanton with the laughing summer-air;
Love-tinctured cheeks, whence roses seek their bloom,
And lips, from which the zephyr steals perfume,—
Invite no more the wild unpolished lay,
But fly like dreams before the morning ray.
Then farewell, love! and farewell, youthful fires!
A nobler warmth my kindled breast inspires.
Far bolder notes the listening wood shall fill:
Flow smooth, ye rivulets; and, ye gales, be still.

See yon fair groves that o'er Amana rise,
And with their spicy breath embalm the skies;

Where every breeze sheds incense o'er the vales,
And every shrub the scent of musk exhales!
See through yon opening glade a glittering scene,
Lawns ever gay, and meadows ever green!
Then ask the groves, and ask the vocal bowers,
Who decked their spiry tops with blooming flowers,
Taught the blue stream o'er sandy vales to flow,
And the brown wild with liveliest hues to glow?
Fair Solima! the hills and dales will sing;
Fair Solima! the distant echoes ring.
But not with idle shows of vain delight,
To charm the soul or to beguile the sight;
At noon on banks of pleasure to repose,
Where bloom intwined the lily, pink, and rose;
Not in proud piles to heap the nightly feast,
Till morn with pearls has decked the glowing east;
Ah! not for this she taught those bowers to rise,
And bade all Eden spring before our eyes:
Far other thoughts her heavenly mind employ,
(Hence, empty pride! and hence, delusive joy!)
To cheer with sweet repast the fainting guest;
To lull the weary on the couch of rest;
To warm the traveller numbed with winter's cold;
The young to cherish, to support the old;
The sad to comfort, and the weak protect;
The poor to shelter, and the lost direct;—
These are her cares, and this her glorious task:
Can heaven a nobler give, or mortals ask?
Come to these groves and these life-breathing glades,
Ye friendless orphans and ye dowerless maids!
With eager haste your mournful mansions leave,

Ye weak, that tremble; and, ye sick, that grieve;
Here shall soft tents, o'er flowery lawns displayed,
At night defend you, and at noon o'ershade;
Here rosy health the sweets of life will shower,
And new delights beguile each varied hour.
Mourns there a widow, bathed in streaming tears?
Stoops there a sire beneath the weight of years?
Weeps there a maid, in pining sadness left,
Of tender parents and of hope bereft?
To Solima their sorrows they bewail;
To Solima they pour their plaintive tale.
She hears; and, radiant as the star of day,
Through the thick forest gains her easy way:
She asks what cares the joyless train oppress,
What sickness wastes them, or what wants distress;
And, as they mourn, she steals a tender sigh,
Whilst all her soul sits melting in her eye:
Then with a smile the healing balm bestows,
And sheds a tear of pity o'er their woes,
Which, as it drops, some soft-eyed angel bears
Transformed to pearl, and in his bosom wears.

When, chilled with fear, the trembling pilgrim roves
Through pathless deserts and through tangled groves,
Where mantling darkness spreads her dragon wing,
And birds of death their fatal dirges sing,
While vapors pale a dreadful glimmering cast,
And thrilling horror howls in every blast;
She cheers his gloom with streams of bursting light,
By day a sun, a beaming moon by night;
Darts through the quivering shades her heavenly ray,
And spreads with rising flowers his solitary way.

Ye heavens, for this in showers of sweetness shed
Your mildest influence o'er her favored head!
Long may her name, which distant climes shall praise,
Live in our notes, and blossom in our lays!
And, like an odorous plant, whose blushing flower
Paints every dale, and sweetens every bower,
Borne to the skies in clouds of soft perfume
Forever flourish, and forever bloom!
These grateful songs, ye maids and youths, renew,
While fresh-blown violets drink the pearly dew;
O'er Azib's banks while love-lorn damsels rove,
And gales of fragrance breathe from Hagar's grove.

So sung the youth, whose sweetly warbled strains
Fair Mena heard, and Saba's spicy plains.
Soothed with his lay, the ravished air was calm,
The winds scarce whispered o'er the waving palm;
The camels bounded o'er the flowery lawn,
Like the swift ostrich or the sportful fawn;
Their silken bands the listening rosebuds rent,
And twined their blossoms round his vocal tent:
He sung, till on the bank the moonlight slept,
And closing flowers beneath the night-dew wept;
Then ceased, and slumbered in the lap of rest
Till the shrill lark had left his low-built nest.
Now hastes the swain to tune his rapturous tales
In other meadows, and in other vales.

Sir William Jones.

Almachara.

THE FAIR OF ALMACHARA.

I.

THE intolerant sun sinks down with glaring eye
Behind the horizontal desert-line,
And upwards casts his robes to float on high,
Suffusing all the clouds with his decline;
Till their intense gold doth incarnadine,
And melt in angry hues, which darken as they die.

Slow rose the naked beauty of the moon
In broad relief against the gloomy vault;
Each smouldering field in azure melted soon,
Before the tenderness of that assault;
And the pure image that men's soul's exalt,
Stood high aloof from earth, as in some visioned swoon.

But now she seemed, from that clear altitude,
To gaze below, with a far-sheening smile,
On Arab tents, gay groups, and gambols rude,
As in maternal sympathy the while;
And now, like swarming bees, o'er many a mile
Forth rush the swarthy forms o' the gilded multitude!

II.

Hark to the cymbals singing!
Hark to their hollow quot!

The gong sonorous swinging
At each sharp pistol-shot!
Bells of sweet tone are ringing!
The Fair begins
With countless dins,
And many a grave-faced plot!

Trumpets and tympans sound,
'Neath the moon's brilliant round,
Which doth entrance
Each passionate dance,
And glows or flashes
Midst jewelled sashes,
Cap, turban, and tiara
In a tossing sea
Of ecstasy,
At the Fair of Almachara!

III.

First came a troop of dervishes,
Who sang a solemn song,
And at each chorus one leapt forth
And spun himself so long
That silver coins, and much applause,
Were showered down by the throng.

Then passed a long and sad-linked chain
Of foreign slaves for sale:
Some clasped their hands and wept like rain,
Some with resolve were pale;

By death or fortitude, they vowed,
  Deliverance should not fail.

And neighing steeds with bloodshot eyes,
  And tails as black as wind
That sweeps the storm-expectant seas,
  Bare-backed careered behind;
Yet, docile to their master's call,
  Their steep-arched necks inclined.

Trumpets and tympans sound
'Neath the moon's brilliant round,
    Which doth entrance
    Each passionate dance,
    And glows or flashes
    Mid cymbal-clashes,
    Rich jewelled sashes,
  Cap, turban, and tiara,
      In a tossing sea
        Of ecstasy,
  At the Fair of Almachara!

IV.

There sit the serpent-charmers,
  Enwound with maze on maze
Of orby folds, which, working fast,
  Puzzle the moonlit gaze.
    Boas and amphisbœnæ gray
    Flash like currents in their play,
Hissing and kissing, till the crowd
  Shriek with delight, or pray aloud!

Now rose a crook-backed juggler,
Who clean cut off both legs;
Astride on his shoulders set them,
And danced on wooden pegs:
And presently his head dropped off,
When another juggler came,
Who gathered his frisky fragments up,
And stuck them in a frame,
From which he issued as at first,
Continuing thus the game.

Trumpets and tympans sound
'Neath the moon's brilliant round,
Which doth entrance
Each passionate dance,
And glows or flashes
Mid cymbal clashes,
Rich jewelled sashes,
Cap, turban, and tiara,
In a tossing sea
Of ecstasy,
At the fair of Almachara!

V.

There do we see the merchants
Smoking with grave pretence:
There, too, the humble dealers
In cassia and frankincense;
And many a Red-Sea mariner,
Swept from its weedy waves,

Who comes to sell his coral rough,
  Torn from its rocks and caves,
With red clay for the potteries,
  Which careful baking craves.

There, too, the Bedouin tumblers
  Roll round like rapid wheels,
Or tie their bodies into knots,
  Hiding both head and heels:
Now standing on each other's heads,
  They race about the Fair,
Or with strange energies inspired
  Leap high into the air,
And wanton thus above the sand
  In graceful circles rare.

There sit the opium-eaters,
  Chanting their gorgeous dreams;
While some, with hollow faces,
  Seem lit by ghastly gleams,
Dumb — and with fixed grimaces!

There dance the Arab maidens,
  With burnished limbs all bare,
Caught by the moon's keen silver
  Through frantic jets of hair!
O naked moon! O wondrous face!
Eternal sadness, beauty, grace,
Smile on the passing human race!

Trumpets and tympans sound
'Neath the moon's brilliant round,

Which doth entrance
Each passionate dance,
And glows or flashes
Mid cymbal clashes,
Rich jewelled sashes,
Cap, turban, and tiara,
In a tossing sea
Of ecstasy,
At the Fair of Almachara!

VI.

There, too, the story-tellers,
With long beards and bald pates,
Right earnestly romancing
Grave follies of the Fates,
For which their circling auditors
Throw coins and bags of dates.
Some of the youths and maidens shed
Sweet tears, or turn quite pale;
But silence, and the clouded pipe,
O'er all the rest prevail.

Mark yon Egyptian sorcerer,
In black and yellow robes,
His ragged raven locks he twines
Around two golden globes!
And now he lashes a brazen gong,
Whirling about with shriek and song;
Till the globes burst in fire,
Which, in a violet spire,

Shoots o'er the loftiest tent-tops there,
Then fades away in perfume rare;
With music somewhere in the sky,
Whereat the sorcerer seems to die!

Broad cymbals are clashing,
And flying and flashing!
And spinning and pashing!
The silver bells ringing!
All tingling and dinging!
Gongs booming and swinging!
The Fair 's at its height
In the cool brilliant night!
While streams the moon's glory
  On javelins and sabres,
And long beards all hoary,
  Midst trumpets and tabors,
Wild strugglings and trammels
Of leaders and camels
And horsemen, in masses,
Midst droves of wild asses,—
The clear beams entrancing,
The passionate dancing,
Glaring fixt, or in flashes,
From jewels in sashes,
  Cap, turban, tiara;
    'T is a tossing sea
    Of ecstasy,
At the Fair of Almachara!

Richard Hengist Horne.

Desert of Arabia.

DESERT OF ARABIA.

HOW beautiful is night!
A dewy freshness fills the silent air;
No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain,
Breaks the serene of heaven:
In full-orbed glory yonder moon divine
Rolls through the dark blue depths.
Beneath her steady ray
The desert-circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.
How beautiful is night!

Who at this untimely hour
Wanders o'er the desert sands?
No station is in view,
Nor palm-grove, islanded amid the waste.
The mother and her child,
The widowed mother and the fatherless boy,
They at this untimely hour
Wander o'er the desert sands.

* * *

She cast her eyes around,
Alas! no tents were there
Beside the bending sands,
No palm-tree rose to spot the wilderness;
The dark blue sky closed round,

And rested like a dome
Upon the circling waste.
She cast her eyes around,
Famine and Thirst were there;
And then the wretched mother bowed her head,
And wept upon her child.

Robert Southey.

HYMN OF THE HEBREW MAID.

WHEN Israel, of the Lord beloved,
Out from the land of bondage came,
Her fathers' God before her moved,
An awful guide in smoke and flame.
By day, along the astonished lands
The cloudy pillar glided slow;
By night, Arabia's crimsoned sands
Returned the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,
And trump and timbrel answered keen,
And Zion's daughters poured their lays,
With priest's and warrior's voice between.
No portents now our foes amaze, —
Forsaken Israel wanders lone;
Our fathers would not know thy ways,
And thou hast left them to their own.

But, present still, though now unseen,
When brightly shines the prosperous day,
Be thoughts of thee a cloudy screen,
To temper the deceitful ray.

And, O, when stoops on Judah's path
In shade and storm the frequent night,
Be thou, long-suffering, slow to wrath,
A burning and a shining light!

Our harps we left by Babel's streams,—
The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn;
No censer round our altar beams,
And mute are timbrel, trump, and horn.
But thou hast said, the blood of goats,
The flesh of rams, I will not prize,—
A contrite heart and humble thoughts
Are mine accepted sacrifice.

Sir Walter Scott.

THE LOCUSTS.

THEN Moath pointed where a cloud
Of locusts, from the desolated fields
Of Syria, winged their way.
"Lo! how created things
Obey the written doom."

Onward they came, a dark continuous cloud
Of congregated myriads numberless,
The rushing of whose wings was as the sound
Of some broad river, headlong in its course
Plunged from a mountain summit; or the roar
Of a wild ocean in the autumnal storm,
Shattering its billows on a shore of rocks.
Onward they came, the winds impelled them on,
Their work was done, their path of ruin past,
Their graves were ready in the wilderness.

Robert Southey

THE OASIS.

STILL o'er the wilderness
Settled the moveless mist.
The timid antelope, that heard their steps,
Stood doubtful where to turn in that dim light.
The ostrich, blindly hastening, met them full.
At night, again in hope,
Young Thalaba lay down:
The morning came, and not one guiding ray
Through the thick mist was visible,
The same deep moveless mist that mantled all.

O for the vulture's scream,
Who haunts for prey the abode of humankind!
O for the plover's pleasant cry
To tell of water near!
O for the camel-driver's song!
For now the water-skin grows light,
Though of the draught, more eagerly desired,
Imperious prudence took with sparing thirst.

Oft from the third night's broken sleep,
As in his dreams he heard
The sound of rushing winds,
Started the anxious youth, and looked abroad,
In vain! for still the deadly calm endured.
Another day passed on;
The water-skin was drained;
But then one hope arrived,
For there was motion in the air!

The sound of the wind arose anon,
That scattered the thick mist,
And lo! at length the lovely face of Heaven!

Alas!—a wretched scene
Was opened on their view.
They looked around, no wells were near,
No tent, no human aid!
Flat on the camel lay the water-skin,
And their dumb servant difficultly now,
Over hot sands and under the hot sun,
Dragged on with patient pain.

But O the joy! the blessed sight!
When in that burning waste the travellers
Saw a green meadow, fair with flowers besprent,
Azure and yellow, like the beautiful fields
Of England, when amid the growing grass
The bluebell bends, the golden king-cup shines,
And the sweet cowslip scents the genial air,
In the merry month of May;
O joy! the travellers
Gaze on each other with hope-brightened eyes,
For sure through that green meadow flows
The living stream! And lo! their famished beast
Sees the restoring sight!
Hope gives his feeble limbs a sudden strength,
He hurries on!—

The herbs so fair to eye
Were senna, and the gentian's blossom blue,

And kindred plants, that with unwatered root
Fed in the burning sand, whose bitter leaves
Even frantic Famine loathed.

Robert Southey.

THE WHIRLWIND.

WHILST he spake, Lobaba's eye,
Upon the distance fixed,
Attended not his speech.
Its fearful meaning drew
The looks of Thalaba;
Columns of sand came moving on,
Red in the burning ray,
Like obelisks of fire,
They rushed before the driving wind.
Vain were all thoughts of flight!
They had not hoped escape,
Could they have backed the dromedary then,
Who in his rapid race
Gives to the tranquil air a drowning force.

High, — high in heaven upcurled
The dreadful sand-spouts moved;
Swift as the whirlwind that impelled their way,
They came toward the travellers!
The old magician shrieked,
And lo! the foremost bursts,
Before the whirlwind's force,
Scattering afar a burning shower of sand.

Robert Southey.

THE SHIP OF THE DESERT.

"ONWARD, my camel!—on, though slow;
Halt not upon these fatal sands!
Onward, my constant camel, go,—
The fierce simoom hath ceased to blow,
We soon shall tread green Syria's lands!

"Droop not, my faithful camel! Now
The hospitable well is near!
Though sick at heart and worn in brow,
I grieve the most to think that thou
And I may part, kind comrade, here!

"O'er the dull waste a swelling mound,
A verdant paradise, I see;
The princely date-palms there abound,
And springs that make it sacred ground
To pilgrims like to thee and me!"

The patient camel's filmy eye,
All lustreless, is fixed in death!
Beneath the sun of Araby
The desert wanderer ceased to sigh,
Exhausted on its burning path.

Then rose upon the wilderness
The solitary driver's cry;

Thoughts of his home upon him press,
As, in his utter loneliness,
He sees his burden-bearer die.

Hope gives no echo to his call, —
Ne'er from his comrade will he sever!
The red sky is his funeral pall;
A prayer, a moan, — 't is over, all, —
Camel and lord now rest forever!

A three-hours' journey from the spring
Loved of the panting caravan,
Within a little sandy ring,
The camel's bones lie whitening,
With thine, old, unlamented man!

William Motherwell.

SAND OF THE DESERT IN AN HOUR-GLASS.

A HANDFUL of red sand, from the hot clime
Of Arab deserts brought,
Within this glass becomes the spy of Time,
The minister of Thought.

How many weary centuries has it been
About those deserts blown!
How many strange vicissitudes has seen,
How many histories known!

Perhaps the camels of the Ishmaelite
Trampled and passed it o'er,

When into Egypt from the patriarch's sight,
His favorite son they bore.

Perhaps the feet of Moses, burnt and bare,
Crushed it beneath their tread;
Or Pharaoh's flashing wheels into the air
Scattered it as they sped;

Or Mary, with the Christ of Nazareth
Held close in her caress,
Whose pilgrimage of hope and love and faith
Illumed the wilderness;

Or anchorites beneath Engaddi's palms
Pacing the Dead Sea beach,
And singing slow their old Armenian psalms
In half-articulate speech;

Or caravans, that from Bassora's gate
With westward steps depart;
Or Mecca's pilgrims, confident of Fate,
And resolute in heart!

These have passed over it, or may have passed!—
Now in this crystal tower
Imprisoned by some curious hand at last,
It counts the passing hour.

And as I gaze, these narrow walls expand;
Before my dreamy eye

Stretches the desert with its shifting sand,
Its unimpeded sky.

And borne aloft by the sustaining blast,
This little golden thread
Dilates into a column high and vast,
A form of fear and dread.

And onward, and across the setting sun,
Across the boundless plain,
The column and its broader shadow run,
Till thought pursues in vain.

The vision vanishes! These walls again
Shut out the lurid sun,
Shut out the hot, immeasurable plain;
The half-hour's sand is run!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

ABDEL-HASSAN.

ABDEL-HASSAN o'er the desert journeyed with his caravan, —
Many a richly laden camel, many a faithful serving-man.

And before the haughty master bowed alike the man and beast;
For the power of Abdel-Hassan was the wonder of the East.

It was now the twelfth day's journey, but its closing did not bring
Abdel-Hassan and his servants to the long-expected spring.

From the ancient line of travel they had wandered far away,
And at evening, faint and weary, on a waste of desert lay.

Fainting men and famished camels stretched them round the master's tent;
For the water-skins were empty, and the dates were nearly spent.

All the night, as Abdel-Hassan on the desert lay apart,
Nothing broke the lifeless silence but the throbbing of his heart;

All the night he heard it beating, while his sleepless, anxious eyes
Watched the shining constellations wheeling onward through the skies.

When the glowing orbs, receding, paled before the coming day,
Abdel-Hassan called his servants, and devoutly knelt to pray.

Then his words were few and solemn to the leader of his train:
"Thirty men and eighty camels, Haroun, in thy care remain.

"Keep the beasts and guard the treasure till the needed
aid I bring.
God is great! His name is mighty! I, alone, will
seek the spring."

Mounted on his strongest camel, Abdel-Hassan rode
away,
While his faithful followers watched him passing in the
blaze of day,

Like a speck upon the desert, like a moving human
hand,
Where the fiery skies were sweeping down to meet the
burning sand.

Passed he then their far horizon, and beyond it rode
alone;
They alone, with Arab patience, lay within its flaming
zone.

Day by day the servants waited, but the master never
came, —
Day by day, in feebler accents, called on Allah's holy
name.

One by one they killed the camels, loathing still the
proffered food,
But in weakness or in frenzy slaked their burning
thirst in blood.

On unheeded heaps of treasure rested each unconscious
head;
While with pious care the dying struggled to entomb
the dead.

So they perished. Gaunt with famine, still did Haroun's
trusty hand
For his latest dead companion scoop sepulture in the
sand.

Then he died; and pious Nature, where he lay so
gaunt and grim,
Moved by her divine compassion, did the same kind
thing for him.

Earth upon her burning bosom held him in his final
rest,
While the hot winds of the desert piled the sand above
his breast.

Onward in his fiery travel Abdel-Hassan held his way,
Yielding to the camel's instinct, halting not, by night
or day,

Till the faithful beast, exhausted in her fearful jour-
ney, fell,
With her eye upon the palm-trees rising o'er the lonely
well:

With a faint, convulsive struggle, and a feeble moan,
she died,
While her still surviving master lay unconscious by her
side.

So he lay until the evening, when a passing caravan
From the dead encumbering camel brought to life the
dying man.

Slowly murmured Abdel-Hassan, as they bathed his fainting head,
"All is lost, for all have perished! they are numbered with the dead.

"I, who had such power and treasure but a single moon ago,
Now my life and poor subsistence to a stranger's bounty owe.

"God is great! His name is mighty! He is victor in the strife!
Stripped of pride and power and substance, he hath left me faith and life."

Sixty years had Abdel-Hassan, since the stranger's friendly hand
Saved him from the burning desert, lived and prospered in the land;

And his life of peaceful labor, in its pure and simple ways,
For his loss fourfold returned him, and a mighty length of days.

Sixty years of faith and patience gave him wisdom's mural crown;
Sons and daughters brought him honor with his riches and renown.

Men beheld his reverend aspect, and revered his blameless name;
And in peace he dwelt with strangers, in the fulness of his fame.

But the heart of Abdel-Hassan yearned, as yearns the heart of man,
Still to die among his kindred, ending life where it began.

So he summoned all his household, and he gave the brief command, —
"Go and gather all our substance; we depart from out the land."

So they journeyed to the desert with a great and numerous train,
To his old nomadic instinct trusting life and wealth again.

It was now the sixth day's journey, when they met the moving sand,
On the great wind of the desert, driving o'er that arid land;

And the air was red and fervid with the simoom's fiery breath;
None could see his nearest fellow in the stifling blast of death.

Blinded men from prostrate camels piled the stores to windward round,
And within the barrier herded, on the hot, unstable ground.

Two whole days the great wind lasted, when the living of the train
From the hot drifts dug the camels and resumed their way again.

But the lines of care grew deeper on the master's swarthy cheek,
While around the weakest fainted and the strongest waxéd weak;

And the water-skins were empty, and a silent murmur ran
From the faint, bewildered servants through the straggling caravan: —

"Let the land we left be blessed! — that to which we go, accurst!
From our pleasant wells of water came we here to die of thirst?"

But the master stilled the murmur with his steadfast, quiet eye:
"God is great," he said, devoutly, — "when he wills it, we shall die."

As he spake, he swept the desert with his vision clear and calm,
And along the far horizon saw the green crest of the palm.

Man and beast, with weak steps quickened, hasted to the lonely well,
And around it, faint and panting, in a grateful tumult fell.

Many days they stayed and rested, and amidst his fervent prayer
Abdel-Hassan pondered deeply that strange bond which held him there.

Then there came an aged stranger, journeying with his caravan;
And when each had each saluted, Abdel-Hassan thus began: —

"Knowest thou this well of water? lies it on the travelled ways?"
And he answered: "From the highway thou art distant many days.

"Where thou seest this well of water, where these thorns and palm-trees stand,
Once the desert swept unbroken in a waste of burning sand;

"There was neither life nor herbage, not a drop of water lay,
All along the arid valley where thou seest this well to-day.

"Sixty years have wrought their changes since a man of wealth and pride,
With his servants and his camels, here, amidst his riches, died.

"As we journeyed o'er the desert, dead beneath the blazing sky,
Here I saw them, beasts and masters, in a common burial lie;

"Thirty men and eighty camels did the shrouding sand enfold;
And we gathered up their treasure, spices, precious stones, and gold;

"Then we heaped the sand above them, and, beneath
the burning sun,
With a friendly care we finished what the winds had
well begun.

"Still I hold that master's treasure, and his record,
and his name;
Long I waited for his kindred, but no kindred ever
came.

"Time, who beareth all things onward, hither bore our
steps again,
When around this spot were scattered whitened bones
of beasts and men;

"And from out the heaving hillocks of the mingled sand
and mould
Lo! the little palms were springing, which to-day are
great and old.

"From the shrubs we held the camels; for I felt that
life of man,
Breaking to new forms of being, through that tender
herbage ran.

"In the graves of men and camels long the dates un-
heeded lay,
Till their germs of life commanded larger life from that
decay;

"And the falling dews, arrested, nourished every tender
shoot,
While beneath, the hidden moisture gathered to each
wandering root.

"So they grew; and I have watched them, as we
journeyed, year by year;
And we digged this well beneath them, where thou
seest it, fresh and clear.

"Thus from waste and loss and sorrow still are joy and
beauty born,
Like the fruitage of these palm-trees and the blossom
of the thorn;

"Life from death, and good from evil! — from that
buried caravan
Springs the life to save the living, many a weak, de-
spairing man."

As he ended, Abdel-Hassan, quivering through his aged
frame,
Asked, in accents slow and broken, "Knowest thou that
master's name?"

"He was known as Abdel-Hassan, famed for wealth
and power and pride;
But the proud have often fallen, and, as he, the great
have died!"

Then, upon the ground before them, prostrate Abdel-
Hassan fell,
With his aged hands extended, trembling, to the lonely
well, —

And the sacred soil beneath him cast upon his hoary
head, —
Named the servants and the camels, — summoned Ha-
roun from the dead, —

Clutched the unconscious palms around him, as if they
were living men, —
And before him, in their order, rose his buried train
again.

Moved by pity, spake the stranger, bending o'er him
in his grief:
"What affects the man of sorrow? Speak, — for speak-
ing is relief."

Then he answered, rising slowly to that aged stranger's
knee, —
"Thou beholdest Abdel-Hassan! They were mine, and
I am he!"

Wondering, stood they all around him, and a reverent
silence kept,
While, amidst them, Abdel-Hassan lifted up his voice
and wept.

Joy and grief, and faith and triumph, mingled in his
flowing tears;
Refluent on his patient spirit rolled the tide of sixty
years.

As the past and present blended, lo! his larger vision
saw,
In his own life's compensation, Nature's universal law.

"God is good, O reverend stranger! He hath taught
me of his ways,
By this great and crowning lesson, in the evening of
my days.

"Keep the treasure, — I have plenty, — and am richer that I see
Life ascend, through change and evil, to that perfect life to be, —

"In each woe a blessing folded, from all loss a greater gain,
Joy and hope from fear and sorrow, rest and peace from toil and pain.

"God is great! His name is mighty! He is victor in the strife!
For he bringeth Good from Evil, and from Death commandeth Life!"

Anonymous.

FLY TO THE DESERT.

FLY to the desert, fly with me,
Our Arab tents are rude for thee;
But, oh, the choice what heart can doubt,
Of tents with love, or thrones without?

Our rocks are rough, but smiling there
The acacia waves her yellow hair,
Lonely and sweet, nor loved the less
For flowering in a wilderness.

Our sands are bare, but down their slope
The silvery-footed antelope
As gracefully and gayly springs
As o'er the marble courts of kings.

Then come, — thy Arab maid will be
The loved and lone acacia-tree,
The antelope, whose feet shall bless
With their light sound thy loneliness.

Oh, there are looks and tones that dart
An instant sunshine through the heart, —
As if the soul that minute caught
Some treasure it through life had sought;

As if the very lips and eyes,
Predestined to have all our sighs,
And never be forgot again,
Sparkled and spoke before us then!

So came thy every glance and tone,
When first on me they breathed and shone;
New, as if brought from other spheres,
Yet welcome as if loved for years.

Then fly with me, — if thou hast known
No other flame, nor falsely thrown
A gem away, that thou hadst sworn
Should ever in thy heart be worn.

Come, if the love thou hast for me
Is pure and fresh as mine for thee,
Fresh as the fountain under ground,
When first 't is by the lapwing found.

But if for me thou dost forsake
Some other maid, and rudely break

Her worshipped image from its base,
To give to me the ruined place;

Then, fare thee well, — I 'd rather make
My bower upon some icy lake
When thawing suns begin to shine,
Than trust to love so false as thine!

Thomas Moore.

THE DATE-GARDEN OF THE DESERT.

FAINT and athirst, in arid wastes astray,
Wandered an Arab, parted from his band,
Who reached an herbless spot at close of day,
Where cooling moisture rose amid the sand.
Though weak and weary, to his arm-pits deep
The pilgrim scooped the sand that wetter grew;
Then, hopeful, laid him down to rest and sleep,
And round his aching limbs his mantle drew.

At early dawn, with trembling form he rose,
And, lo! the basin he at twilight made,
Mirrored the sun, and, strengthened by repose,
He quaffed the fountain, and his thirst allayed.
"Allah be praised!" he sang with bounding heart,
And from his scanty store of dates he ate;
Both man and beast, with strength renewed, depart,
And reach their tribe where shifting sands abate.

One seed alone that morn unnoticed fell,
One kernel of their fruit in that small pool,

Whose sleeping germ awoke in its lone cell
A tiny rootlet kept by moisture cool.
Behold! its fibrous threads sink slowly down,
A little stem arises; leaves take form,
And feathery fans unfold a lovely crown,
And cap a palm-tree daring heat and storm.

Its tuft of living greenness nodded high,
Its blossoming clusters perfumed all the waste;
Majestic, pierced the unimpeded sky,
And beckoned all that saw to thither haste.
Far over that secluded, boundless plain,
Its sweets exhaled to lure all living things,
Till, midst its foliage finding rest again,
Swift birds of passage folded weary wings.

Its ripening fruits, like rubied gems of gold,
In luscious bunches hung on every limb,
There insects hummed, and life grew manifold;
From many nests was breathed the birdling's hymn;
And glossy vines and brilliant shrubs soon wound
Their loving bands around the tall, strong tree;
Young palms arose, and o'er the naked ground
Coarse grasses crept, and twining growths swung free.

Erelong the shadows of a little wood
Shut out the scorching beams of lurid sun,
Where panting antelopes unfrighted stood, —
God's timid creatures gathered one by one.
The swift gazelle and ostrich daily fed
On tender buds and herbage fresh and green;

The golden-hammer tapped all day o'erhead,
Nor aught disturbed the beauty of the scene.

So years slipped by; and he who dropped the date
Within the hollow of the lonely vale,
Among his children's children sadly sate;
With age and sorrow drooping, wan and pale;
While hostile tribes annoyed the kindred sore,
And drouth had withered all the sward around,
He called a council, and long pondered o'er
How some relief from many ills be found.

A sudden gleam lit all his rugged face,
And lifted as a cloud his load of care;
He sent his sons to that lone garden-place,
To see if trace of moisture still was there; —
That vale so precious in the long ago,
When death was baffled by the fount that flowed
From those wet sands, — and, bowing faint and low,
Once more he asked God's blessing, oft bestowed.

Lo! they return with shouts and hurried tramp,
"Haste! haste," they cry, "to that most blest retreat!
Yea, by to-morrow eve we may encamp
In earthly Eden, refuge fruitful, sweet!"
The tears ran streaming from the old man's eyes, —
"See what a kernel has produced," he said,
"For our deliverance! I pray you prize
And lay me 'neath that palm when I am dead!"

George Bancroft Griffith.

THE PRAYER IN THE DESERT.

UPON his cloak the Arab stands;
Behind him stretch the solemn sands
Back to the barren hills that lie
Serene against the azure sky.
Slow-winding from their dim defiles
O'er scorching waste and sedgy isles,
From lordly Cairo, Mecca-bound,
Threading the plain without a sound
Save when the burdened camels groan
Or tents are pitched by fountain-stone,
The long-drawn caravan is seen
Wrapped in the desert's blinding sheen.

No muezzin calls from minaret,
Though clear the burning sun has set;
But waste and hill and brooding sky
Have stirred his soul to deep reply,
And he, the chief of all his tribe,
Has spurred him forward to ascribe
Glory to Allah, ere the gloom
And fierceness of the dread simoom
Shall overwhelm, or failing well
No pilgrim spare, His power to tell.

He plants his lance; his steed he frees;
Light from the north the rising breeze
Lifts the hot cloud, and moans away
Down to some Petra's still decay,

Sad, as if wailing fall and rise
Were won from dying pilgrims' sighs, —
Their couch by billowy sands o'erblown
Where Azrael keeps watch alone.
And now, his sandals' weight unbound,
The desert space is holy ground;
No more he sees the weary train,
The sombre hills, the dusty plain,
But greenest fields of Paradise
Shine fair before his ravished eyes.
He hears the flow of crystal streams,
He sees the wondrous light that gleams
From Allah's throne, ablaze with gems,
And, far below, the slender stems
Of plumy palms, whose ripe dates fall
When winds blow cool across the wall;
While sweeter than the bulbul's note
Within the dusk pomegranate bowers,
When his full soul he fain would float
Forth to their yearning, flaming flowers,
The voice of angel Israfeel
Comes winding, warbling through the air, —
Oh that 't were resurrection's peal,
And he, the dead, might waken there, —
Waken and follow Edenward,
Lost in the splendor of the Lord!

Soon will his comrades round him throng,
While tents are pitched with jest and song;
But not the night-dews, chill and fleet,
Nor noontide's burning, blasting heat,

Nor red simoom, nor mocking well
Can break his vision's sacred spell,
Nor lure his joy that forward flies
To build and sing in fairer skies.

O Arab! we are one with thee!
All day we rove some desert sea;
The winds are dead, the wells are dry,
Above us flames the torrid sky;
And only in some twilight calm,
When fires are spent and air is balm,
Beyond our griefs and fears we ride;
Our sandal-cares we cast aside;
The clouds of doubt are backward blown,
And lo! we meet the Lord alone!

Edna Dean Proctor.

El Ghor.

THE ROCK IN EL GHOR.

DEAD Petra in her hill-tomb sleeps,
Her stones of emptiness remain;
Around her sculptured mystery sweeps
The lonely waste of Edom's plain.

From the doomed dwellers in the cleft
The bow of vengeance turns not back;
Of all her myriads none are left
Along the Wady Mousa's track.

Clear in the hot Arabian day
Her arches spring, her statues climb;
Unchanged, the graven wonders pay
No tribute to the spoiler, Time!

Unchanged the awful lithograph
Of power and glory undertrod,—
Of nations scattered like the chaff
Blown from the threshing-floor of God.

Yet shall the thoughtful stranger turn
From Petra's gates, with deeper awe,
To mark afar the burial urn
Of Aaron on the cliffs of Hor;

And where upon its ancient guard
Thy Rock, El Ghor, is standing yet,—
Looks from its turrets desertward,
And keeps the watch that God has set.

The same as when in thunders loud
It heard the voice of God to man,—
As when it saw in fire and cloud
The angels walk in Israel's van!

Or when from Ezion-Geber's way
It saw the long procession file,
And heard the Hebrew timbrels play
The music of the lordly Nile;

Or saw the tabernacle pause,
Cloud-bound, by Kadesh Barnea's wells,

While Moses graved the sacred laws,
And Aaron swung his golden bells.

Rock of the desert, prophet-sung!
How grew its shadowing pile at length,
A symbol, in the Hebrew tongue,
Of God's eternal love and strength.

On lip of bard and scroll of seer,
From age to age went down the name,
Until the Shiloh's promised year,
And Christ, the Rock of Ages, came!

The path of life we walk to-day
Is strange as that the Hebrews trod;
We need the shadowing rock, as they,—
We need, like them, the guides of God.

God send his angels, Cloud and Fire,
To lead us o'er the desert sand!
God give our hearts their long desire,
His shadow in a weary land!

John Greenleaf Whittier.

Hor, the Mount.

MOUNT HOR.

WHERE famed Mount Hor lifts high his barren peak,
And, king of air, the eagle whets his beak,
I climb in awe, pass many a nameless cave,

And reach at length the Hebrew's holy grave.
And here he sleeps, above the world serene;
As thus against the mouldering slabs I lean,
And gaze on yonder heaven, whose dewy tears
Have wet these blocks for dark uncounted years,
My bosom thrills, and heated Fancy's eye
Sees Aaron's ancient spirit hovering nigh,
Calm waiting, till Heaven's final thunders roll,
And call the dust to join the undying soul.

Nicholas Michell.

Horeb, the Mount.

MOUNT HOREB.

THE historic Muse, from age to age,
Through many a waste heart-sickening page
Hath traced the works of man:
But a celestial call to-day
Stays her, like Moses, on her way,
The works of God to scan.

Far seen across the sandy wild,
Where like a solitary child
He thoughtless roamed and free,
One towering thorn was wrapt in flame,—
Bright without blaze it went and came:
Who would not turn and see?

Along the mountain ledges green
The scattered sheep at will may glean
The desert's spicy stores:
The while, with undivided heart,
The shepherd talks with God apart,
And, as he talks, adores.

Ye too, who tend Christ's wildering flock,
Well may ye gather round the rock
That once was Sion's hill:
To watch the fire upon the mount
Still blazing, like the solar fount,
Yet unconsuming still.

Caught from that blaze by wrath divine,
Lost branches of the once-loved vine,
Now withered, spent, and sere,
See Israel's sons, like glowing brands,
Tost wildly o'er a thousand lands
For twice a thousand year.

God will not quench nor slay them quite,
But lifts them like a beacon light
The apostate Church to scare;
Or like pale ghosts that darkling roam,
Hovering around their ancient home,
But find no refuge there.

Ye blessed angels! if of you
There be, who love the ways to view
Of kings and kingdoms here,

(And sure, 't is worth an angel's gaze,
To see throughout the dreary maze,
God teaching love and fear):

O, say, in all the bleak expanse,
Is there a spot to win your glance,
So bright, so dark as this?
A hopeless faith, a homeless race,
Yet seeking the most holy place,
And owning the true bliss!

* * *

John Keble.

Mecca.

MOHAMMED.

UTTER the song, O my soul! the flight and return of Mohammed,
Prophet and priest, who scattered abroad both evil and blessing,
Huge wasteful empires founded and hallowed slow persecution,
Soul-withering, but crushed the blasphemous rites of the Pagan
And idolatrous Christians. For veiling the gospel of Jesus,
They, the best corrupting, had made it worse than the vilest.

Wherefore Heaven decreed the enthusiast warrior of Mecca,
Choosing good from iniquity rather than evil from goodness.
Loud the tumult in Mecca surrounding the fane of the idol;
Naked and prostrate the priesthood were laid, — the people with mad shouts
Thundering now, and now with saddest ululation
Flew, as over the channel of rock-stone the ruinous river
Shatters its waters abreast, and in mazy uproar bewildered,
Rushes dividuous all, — all rushing impetuous onward.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Medina.

MEDINA.

THOU wondrous brother of the Prophet, sun!
So brightly on Medina's temple burning;
And scarce less beautiful the crescent moon,
When moving gently o'er the shadows dun
Of evening, and their verge to silver turning.
Oh, what a lovely, soft tranquillity
Rests on the earth and breathes along the sea!
Here is no cedar bent with misery;
No holy cypress sighs or weeps, as seen

In other lands, where his dark branches green
Mourn in the desert o'er neglected graves:
Here his all-sheltering boughs he calmly waves
In the dim light, the sacred vigils keeping
O'er the blest ashes on earth's bosom sleeping.
Picture of God! upon the prophet's shrine
Shine brightly, — brightly, beautifully shine
Upon those holy fields where once he trod,
And flowers sprung up beneath his innocent feet,
Tulips and aloes and narcissus, sweet,
A lovely carpet for the child of God!
There have our privileged, pilgrim footsteps been,
This have we seen, — yes, brother! this have seen:
The grave, the life, the ashes, and the dome
Eternal, and the heavens: and there have bought
The grace of God and found the joy we sought,
A certain entrance to our final home.
And now, be short our houseward way!
Our fathers' habitations now appear!
Oh, with what transports shall we hear them say,
With what loud greetings, "Welcome, welcome here!"
The swelling-bosomed wife, the black-haired son
And black-eyed daughter greet our joyous train,
Rushing from our own doors they hither run,
And songs of rapture loudly hail us then.
Their trembling hands the fragrant aloe bear,
Which joyful o'er our wearied limbs they throw;
Home of our fathers! now appear,
Our houseward path be shortened now!

Semen Sergejewitsch Bobroff. Tr. J. Bowring.

Petra (Selah).

PETRA.

BUT near Mount Hor, for countless ages hid,
And sealed like vaults in Cheops' pyramid,
Hemmed in by rocks, a wall on every side,
Lo! queen of deserts, Petra veils her pride.
So wild that scene without, and stern and bare,
Ye scarce would deem man once had dwelling there,
But think those rocks the goat could only roam,
Or on their summits eagles make their home.
We pierce yon dell at twilight's deepening hour;
Tall cliffs each side in savage grandeur tower;
Meeting aloft, like threatening foes they seem,
Till scarce between the clefts the stars can gleam.
The guides, with unsheathed daggers, lead the way,
For ofttimes here the robber lurks for prey:
The flickering torches show each swarthy face,
And wilder horror lend that lonely place.
Dark fir and cypress wave above our head,
And ivy bands fantastic garlands spread.
A fiery ball oft gleams where black rocks scowl, —
'T is the large eye of some sepulchral owl;
And oft a step is heard the crags among, —
'T is the lone wolf that steals in shade along,
And turns and looks, yet flies the torch's glare,
And growls in rage that man disturbs him there.

Nicholas Michell.

Red Sea.

THE PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA.

WITH heat o'erlabored and the length of way,
On Ethan's beach the bands of Israel lay.
'T was silence all, the sparkling sands along;
Save where the locust trilled her feeble song,
Or blended soft in drowsy cadence fell
The wave's low whisper or the camel's bell.
'T was silence all! — the flocks for shelter fly
Where, waving light, the acacia shadows lie;
Or where, from far, the flattering vapors make
The noontide semblance of a misty lake:
While the mute swain, in careless safety spread,
With arms enfolded, and dejected head,
Dreams o'er his wondrous call, his lineage high,
And, late revealed, his children's destiny.
For, not in vain, in thraldom's darkest hour,
Had sped from Amram's sons the word of power;
Nor failed the dreadful wand, whose godlike sway
Could lure the locust from her airy way;
With reptile war assail their proud abodes,
And mar the giant pomp of Egypt's Gods.
O helpless Gods! who naught availed to shield
From fiery rain your Zoan's favored field!
O helpless Gods! who saw the curdled blood
Taint the pure lotus of your ancient flood,
And fourfold night the wondering earth enchain,

While Memnon's orient harp was heard in vain!—
Such musings held the tribes, till now the west
With milder influence on their temples prest?
And that portentous cloud which, all the day,
Hung its dark curtain o'er their weary way
(A cloud by day, a friendly flame by night),
Rolled back its misty veil, and kindled into light!—
Soft fell the eve;—but, ere the day was done,
Tall waving banners streaked the level sun;
And wide and dark along the horizon red,
In sandy surge the rising desert spread.
"Mark, Israel, mark!"—On that strange sight intent,
In breathless terror, every eye was bent;
And busy faction's fast-increasing hum,
And female voices shriek, "They come, they come!"
They come, they come! in scintillating show
O'er the dark mass the brazen lances glow;
And sandy clouds in countless shapes combine,
As deepens or extends the long tumultuous line;
And fancy's keener glance even now may trace
The threatening aspects of each mingled race:
For many a coal-black tribe and cany spear,
The hireling guards of Misraim's throne, were there.
From distant Cush they trooped, a warrior train,
Siwah's green isle and Sennaar's marly plain;
On either wing their fiery coursers check
The parched and sinewy sons of Amalek;
While close behind, inured to feast on blood,
Decked in Behemoth's spoils, the tall Shangalla strode.
Mid blazing helms and bucklers rough with gold
Saw ye how swift the scythéd chariots rolled?

Lo, these are they whom, lords of Afric's fates,
Old Thebes hath poured through all her hundred gates
Mother of armies! — How the emeralds glowed,
Where, flushed with power and vengeance, Pharaoh rode!
And stoled in white, those brazen wheels before,
Osiris' ark his swarthy wizards bore;
And still responsive to the trumpet's cry
The priestly sistrum murmured, — Victory!
Why swell these shouts that rend the desert's gloom?
Whom come ye forth to combat? — warriors, whom?—
These flocks and herds, — this faint and weary train,
Red from the scourge and recent from the chain?
God of the poor, the poor and friendless save!
Giver and Lord of freedom, help the slave!
North, south, and west the sandy whirlwinds fly,
The circling horns of Egypt's chivalry.
On earth's last margin throng the weeping train;
Their cloudy guide moves on: "And must we swim
the main?"
Mid the light spray their snorting camels stood,
Nor bathed a fetlock in the nauseous flood.
He comes, — their leader comes! the man of God
O'er the wide waters lifts his mighty rod,
And onward treads. The circling waves retreat,
In hoarse deep murmurs, from his holy feet;
And the chased surges, inly roaring, show
The hard wet sand, and coral hills below.

With limbs that falter, and with hearts that swell,
Down, down they pass, — a steep and slippery dell,
Around them rise, in pristine chaos hurled,
The ancient rocks, the secrets of the world;

And flowers that blush beneath the ocean green,
And caves, the sea-calves' low-roofed haunt, are seen.
Down, safely down the narrow pass they tread;
The beetling waters storm above their head,
While far behind retires the sinking day,
And fades on Edom's hills its latest ray.

Yet not from Israel fled the friendly light,
Or dark to them, or cheerless came the night.
Still in their van, along that dreadful road,
Blazed broad and fierce the brandished torch of God.
Its meteor glare a tenfold lustre gave
On the long mirror of the rosy wave,
While its blest beams a sunlike heat supply,
Warm every cheek, and dance in every eye,—
To them alone; for Misraim's wizard train
Invoke for light their monster-gods in vain:
Clouds heaped on clouds their struggling sight confine,
And tenfold darkness broods above their line.
Yet on they fare, by reckless vengeance led,
And range unconscious through the ocean's bed;
Till midway now, that strange and fiery form
Showed his dread visage lightening through the storm;
With withering splendor blasted all their might,
And brake their chariot-wheels, and marred their coursers' flight.
"Fly, Misraim, fly!" The ravenous floods they see,
And fiercer than the floods, the Deity.
"Fly, Misraim, fly!" From Edom's coral strand
Again the prophet stretched his dreadful wand;
With one wild crash the thundering waters sweep,
And all is waves,—a dark and lonely deep,

Yet o'er those lonely waves such murmurs past,
As mortal wailing swelled the nightly blast,
And strange and sad the whispering breezes bore
The groans of Egypt to Arabia's shore.
O, welcome came the morn, where Israel stood
In trustless wonder by the avenging flood!
O, welcome came the cheerful morn, to show
The drifted wreck of Zoan's pride below;
The mangled limbs of men, the broken car,
A few sad relics of a nation's war, —
Alas, how few! Then, soft as Elim's well,
The precious tears of new-born freedom fell.
And he, whose hardened heart alike had borne
The house of bondage and the oppressor's scorn,
The stubborn slave, by hope's new beams subdued,
In faltering accents sobbed his gratitude,
Till, kindling into warmer zeal, around
The virgin timbrel waked its silver sound;
And in fierce joy, no more by doubt suppressed,
The struggling spirit throbbed in Miriam's breast.
She, with bare arms, and fixing on the sky
The dark transparence of her lucid eye,
Poured on the winds of heaven her wild sweet harmony.
"Where now," she sang, "the tall Egyptian spear?
On's sunlike shield, and Zoan's chariot, where?
Above their ranks the whelming waters spread.
Shout, Israel, for the Lord hath triumphéd!"
And every pause between as Miriam sang,
From tribe to tribe the martial thunder rang,
And loud and far their stormy chorus spread,
"Shout, Israel, for the Lord hath triumphéd!"

Reginald Heber.

MIRIAM'S SONG.

SOUND the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed, — his people are free.
Sing, for the pride of the tyrant is broken, —
His chariots, his horsemen, all splendid and brave,
How vain was their boasting! The Lord hath but spoken,
And chariots and horsemen are sunk in the wave.
Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed, — his people are free.

Praise to the Conqueror, praise to the Lord!
His word was our arrow, his breath was our sword!
Who shall return to tell Egypt the story
Of those she sent forth in the hour of her pride?
For the Lord hath looked out from his pillar of glory,
And all her brave thousands are dashed in the tide.
Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!
Jehovah has triumphed, — his people are free.

Thomas Moore.

A LEGEND OF THE RED SEA.

"The Genii's blessings (which are curses) descended upon him."
Arab Proverb.

HALF-STARVED, the Arab Abib stands,
Upon the Red Sea's burning sands,
Beating his breast with bleeding hands.

A poor and half-starved fisherman,
The deep dark wave he tries to scan,
Vainly, as but the hopeless can.

The coral spikes had torn his net,
That all the night in vain was set,
His flimsy boat was leaky wet.

The sun's hot shafts had through him thrust,
His hooks the night-dews blunt and rust, —
In God the Arab has no trust.

He sees no angel on the hills,
With eyes that deepest pity fills
For human griefs and human ills.

Snapping his oars upon his knee,
He curses the poor locust-tree,
That sheds its fruit so lavishly.

He turned, and lo! a quick star fell
From where the black-eyed houris dwell
(What men think heaven is often hell).

It dropped, — and as it touched the earth,
It broke to diamond-dust; with mirth
Of mocking voices came the birth.

A giant Afrit, wicked, proud,
Half fire (but fire that 's hid in cloud),
Arose, and Abib shrieked aloud.

"Thou foolish child of clay," it said,
"We Genii mourn not for the dead.
I am your god where'er I tread!

"There is no ruler of this world,
He from his throne has long been hurled,
His sun-cloud banner long since furled.

"The God you seek is but a thing
Of mad fool's trances, — a dream-king,
A God without a brain or wing.

"What need of pining? — there is gold,
More than thy crazy bark can hold,
In this dark sea — if thou art bold.

"Fools only kneel: stand on thy feet,
The world beneath thee tramp and beat;
Dominion to the wise is sweet.

"Let down thy net before the sun
His useless circle hath outrun.
Thy insect life is but begun."

A mist arose out of the sea:
"My Simoom horse has come for me,"
The Genii cried: "be rich and free."

The fire-wind came and swept the sand,
And demons, an exulting band,
Rode with it to the desert land.

* * *

Abib awakes from out his trance;
The moonbeams on the waters dance,
The quick waves meeting, flash and glance.

Without a prayer his net he threw,
The ropes in a wide circle flew,
And slowly settled sure and true.

He drags, and lo! a toiling weight,
A burden ponderous and great,
Then glimmers of a golden freight.

A dead man's hair mats in the strings,
A golden robe that laps and clings,
A blazing crown with emerald rings.

A chain with jewelled beetles strung,
A massy golden targe that rung,
Still to the Pharaoh's body hung.

A frown is on the dead king's face,
His lips are pressed in stern grimace,
One hand is on his quiver-case.

And on his ring a jewel, see
"Pharaoh, the son of Isis, — he
Who rules both Egypts, — kneel to me."

Now Abib to his hut returns,
The signet on his turban burns,
"Yes! this is what God's chosen earns."

They crown him lord, — he spurns the priest,
Drives pilgrims from the holy East,
And slays the Christians at their feast.

The Arab rebels crown him king,
His mandates fly on tireless wing,
And make the desert echoes ring.

The Genii's curse is on his head,
The desert, wheresoe'er he tread,
With human blood is crimson red.

Soon cohorts come and fire the town,
And Abib, with his head hung down,
Upon a cross now wears the crown.

Walter Thornbury.

Sabla.

THE BATTLE OF SABLA.

SABLA, thou saw'st the exulting foe,
In fancied triumph crowned;
Thou heard'st their frantic females throw
These galling taunts around.

"Make now your choice; the terms we give,
Desponding victims, hear:
These fetters on your hands receive,
Or in your hearts the spear."

"And is the conflict o'er," we cried,
"And lie we at your feet?
And dare you vauntingly decide
The fortune we must meet?

"A brighter day we soon shall see,
Though now the prospect lowers,
And conquest, peace, and liberty
Shall yield our future hours."

The foe advanced: in firm array
We rushed o'er Sabla's sands;
And the red sabre marked our way
Amidst their yielding bands.

Then, as they writhed in death's cold grasp,
We cried, "Our choice is made:
These hands the sabre's hilt shall clasp,
Your hearts shall have the blade."

Taafer Ben Alba. *Tr. Anon.*

Sinai, the Mount.

MOSES ON MOUNT SINAI.

UP a rough peak, that toward the stormy sky
From Sinai's sandy ridges rose aloft,
Osarsiph, priest of Hieropolis,
Now Moses named, ascended reverently
To meet and hear the bidding of the Lord.

But, though he knew that all his ancient lore
Traditionary from the birth of Time,
And all that power which waited on his hand,
Even from the day his just instinctive wrath
Had smote the Egyptian ravisher, and all
The wisdom of his calm and ordered mind
Were nothing in the presence of his God,
Yet was there left a certain seed of pride,
Vague consciousness of some self-centred strength,
That made him cry, "Why, Lord, com'st thou to me,
Only a voice, a motion of the air,
A thing invisible, impalpable,
Leaving a void, an unreality,
Within my heart? I would, with every sense,
Know thou wert there, — I would be all in thee!
Let me at least behold thee as thou art;
Disperse this corporal darkness by thy light;
Hallow my vision by thy glorious form,
So that my sense be blest forevermore!"

Thus spoke the Prophet, and the Voice replied,
As in low thunders over distant seas:

"Beneath the height to which thy feet have striven,
A hollow trench divides the cliffs of sand,
Widened by rains and deepened every year.
Gaze straight across it, for there opposite
To where thou standest I will place myself,
And then, if such remain thy fixed desire,
I will descend to side by side with thee."

So Moses gazed across the rocky vale;
And the air darkened, and a lordly bird
Poised in the midst of its long-journeying flight,

And touched his feet with limp and fluttering wings,
And all the air around, above, below,
Was metamorphosed into sound, — such sound
That separate tones were undistinguishable,
And Moses fell upon his face, as dead.
Yet life and consciousness of life returned;
And, when he raised his head, he saw no more
The deep ravine and mountain opposite,
But one large level of distracted rocks,
With the wide desert quaking all around.
Then Moses fell upon his face again,
And prayed, — "O, pardon the presumptuous thought,
That I could look upon thy face and live:
Wonder of wonders! that mine ear has heard
Thy voice unpalsied, and let such great grace
Excuse the audacious blindness that o'erleaps
Nature's just bounds and thy discerning will!"

Lord Houghton.

THE SCHEIK OF SINAI IN 1830.

"LIFT me without the tent, I say, — me and my Ottoman;
I 'll see the messenger myself! It is the caravan
From Africa, thou sayest, and they bring us news of war?
Draw me without the tent, and quick! As at the desert-well
The freshness of the bubbling stream delights the tired gazelle,
So pant I for the voice of him that cometh from afar!"

The scheik was lifted from his tent, and thus outspake the Moor:
"I saw, old chief, the tricolor on Algiers' topmost tower;
Upon its battlements the silks of Lyons flutter free.
Each morning in the market-place the muster-drum is beat,
And to the war-hymn of Marseilles the squadrons pace the street.
The armament from Toulon sailed; the Franks have crossed the sea.

"Towards the south the columns marched beneath a cloudless sky;
Their weapons glittered in the blaze of the sun of Barbary;
And with the dusty desert-sand their horses' manes were white.
The wild marauding tribes dispersed in terror of their lives;
They fled unto the mountains with their children and their wives,
And urged the clumsy dromedary up the Atlas' height.

"The Moors have ta'en their vantage-ground, the volleys thunder fast;
The dark defile is blazing like a heated oven-blast;
The lion hears the strange turmoil, and leaves his mangled prey, —
No place was that for him to feed, — and thick and loud the cries,

Feu ! Allah ! Allah ! En avant ! in mingled discord rise;
The Franks have reached the summit, — they have won the victory!

"With bristling steel, upon the top the victors take their stand:
Beneath their feet, with all its towns, they see the promised land, —
From Tunis even unto Fez, from Atlas to the seas.
The cavaliers alight to gaze; and gaze full well they may,
Where countless minarets stand up so solemnly and gray
Amidst the dark-green masses of the flowering myrtle-trees.

"The almond blossoms in the vale, the aloe from the rock
Throws out its long and prickly leaves, nor dreads the tempest's shock:
A blessed land, I ween, is that, though luckless is its Bey.
'There lies the sea, beyond lies France! her banners in the air
Float proudly and triumphantly, — a salvo! come, prepare!'
And loud and long the mountains rang with that glad artillery."

"'T is they!" exclaimed the aged scheik. "I 've battled by their side;
I fought beneath the Pyramids! That day of deathless pride, —

Red as thy turban, Moor, that eve, was every creek in Nile!
But tell me," and he griped his hand, "their sultan? Stranger, say, —
His form, his face, — his gesture, man, — thou saw'st him in the fray?
His eye, — what wore he?" But the Moor sought in his vest awhile.

"Their sultan, Scheik, remains at home within his palace walls;
He sends a pasha in his stead to brave the bolts and balls:
He was not there. An aga burst for him through Atlas' hold.
Yet I can show thee somewhat too: a Frankish cavalier
Told me his effigy was stamped upon this medal here, —
He gave it me with others for an Arab steed I sold."

The old man took the golden coin; gazed steadfastly awhile;
If that could be the sultan whom from the banks of Nile
He guided o'er the desert-path; then sighed, and thus spake he:
"'T is not his eye, 't is not his brow, — another face is there;
I never saw this man before, — his head is like a pear!
Take back the medal, Moor, — 't is not that which I thought to see."

Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. W. E. Aytoun.

TURKESTAN

(INDEPENDENT TARTARY).

Bokhara.

THE RETURN AFTER ABSENCE.

OH the breeze of the mountain is soothing and sweet,
Warm breathing of love, and the friends we shall meet;
And the rocks of the desert, so rough when we roam,
Seem soft, soft as silk, on the dear path of home;
The white waves of the Jeikon, that foam through their speed,
Seem scarcely to reach to the girth of my steed.

Rejoice, O Bokhara, and flourish for aye!
Thy King comes to meet thee, and long shall he stay.
Our King is our moon, and Bokhara our skies,
Where soon that fair light of the heavens shall arise,
Bokhara our orchard, the cypress our king,
In Bokhara's fair orchard soon destined to spring.

John Leyden.

THE SICK KING OF BOKHARA.

HUSSEIN.

O MOST just Vizier, send away
The cloth-merchants, and let them be,
Them and their dues, this day: the King
Is ill at ease, and calls for thee.

THE VIZIER.

O merchants, tarry yet a day
Here in Bokhara: but at noon
To-morrow, come, and ye shall pay
Each fortieth web of cloth to me,
As the law is, and go your way.

O Hussein, lead me to the King.
Thou teller of sweet tales, thine own,
Ferdousi's, and the others', lead.
How is it with my lord?

HUSSEIN.

Alone,
Ever since prayer-time, he doth wait,
O Vizier, without lying down,
In the great window of the gate,
Looking into the Registàn;
Where through the sellers' booths the slaves
Are this way bringing the dead man.
O Vizier, here is the King's door.

THE KING.

O Vizier, may I bury him?

THE VIZIER.

O King, thou know'st, I have been sick
These many days, and heard no thing
(For Allah shut my ears and mind),
Not even what thou dost, O King.
Wherefore, that I may counsel thee,
Let Hussein, if thou wilt, make haste
To speak in order what hath chanced.

THE KING.

O Vizier, be it as thou say'st.

HUSSEIN.

Three days since, at the time of prayer,
A certain Moollah, with his robe
All rent, and dust upon his hair,
Watched my lord's coming forth, and pushed
The golden mace-bearers aside,
And fell at the King's feet, and cried:

"Justice, O King, and on myself!
On this great sinner, who hath broke
The law, and by the law must die!
Vengeance, O King!"

But the King spoke:
"What fool is this, that hurts our ears

With folly? or what drunken slave?
My guards, what, prick him with your spears!
Prick me the fellow from the path!"
As the king said, so was it done,
And to the mosque my lord passed on.

But on the morrow, when the King
Went forth again, the holy book
Carried before him, as is right,
And through the square his path he took,

My man comes running, flecked with blood
From yesterday, and falling down
Cries out most earnestly: "O King,
My lord, O King, do right, I pray!

"How canst thou, ere thou hear, discern
If I speak folly? but a king,
Whether a thing be great or small,
Like Allah, hears and judges all.

"Wherefore hear thou! Thou know'st, how fierce
In these last days the sun hath burned;
That the green water in the tanks
Is to a putrid puddle turned;
And the canal, that from the stream
Of Samarcand is brought this way,
Wastes, and runs thinner every day.

"Now I at nightfall had gone forth
Alone, and in a darksome place

Under some mulberry-trees I found
A little pool; and in brief space
With all the water that was there
I filled my pitcher, and stole home
Unseen; and having drink to spare,
I hid the can behind the door,
And went up on the roof to sleep.

"But in the night, which was with wind
And burning dust, again I creep
Down, having fever, for a drink.

"Now meanwhile had my brethren found
The water-pitcher where it stood
Behind the door upon the ground,
And called my mother; and they all,
As they were thirsty, and the night
Most sultry, drained the pitcher there;
Thus they sate with it, in my sight,
Their lips still wet, when I came down.

"Now mark! I, being fevered, sick
(Most unblest also), at that sight
Brake forth, and cursed them,—dost thou hear?
One was my mother— Now, do right!"

But my lord mused a space, and said,
"Send him away, sirs, and make on.
It is some madman," the King said:
As the King said, so was it done.

The morrow at the selfsame hour
In the King's path, behold, the man,
Not kneeling, sternly fixed: he stood
Right opposite, and thus began,
Frowning grim down: "Thou wicked King,
Most deaf where thou shouldst most give ear!
What, must I howl in the next world,
Because thou wilt not listen here?

"What, wilt thou pray, and get thee grace,
And all grace shall to me be grudged?
Nay but, I swear, from this thy path
I will not stir till I be judged."

Then they who stood about the King
Drew close together and conferred,
Till that the King stood forth and said,
"Before the priests thou shalt be heard."

But when the Ulemas were met
And the thing heard, they doubted not;
But sentenced him, as the law is,
To die by stoning on the spot.

Now the King charged us secretly:
"Stoned must he be, the law stands so:
Yet, if he seek to fly, give way:
Forbid him not, but let him go."

So saying, the King took a stone,
And cast it softly: but the man,

With a great joy upon his face,
Kneeled down, and cried not, neither ran.

So they, whose lot it was, cast stones;
That they flew thick and bruised him sore:
But he praised Allah with loud voice,
And remained kneeling as before.

My lord had covered up his face:
But when one told him, "He is dead,"
Turning him quickly to go in,
"Bring thou to me his corpse," he said.

And truly, while I speak, O King,
I hear the bearers on the stair.
Wilt thou they straightway bring him in? —
Ho! enter ye who tarry there!

THE VIZIER.

O King, in this I praise thee not.
Now must I call thy grief not wise.
Is he thy friend, or of thy blood,
To find such favor in thine eyes?

Nay, were he thine own mother's son,
Still, thou art king, and the law stands.
It were not meet the balance swerved,
The sword were broken in thy hands.

But being nothing, as he is,
Why, for no cause, make sad thy face?

Lo, I am old: three kings, ere thee,
Have I seen reigning in this place.

But who, through all this length of time,
Could bear the burden of his years,
If he for strangers pained his heart
Not less than those who merit tears?

* * *

THE KING.

O Vizier, thou art old, I young.
Clear in these things I cannot see.
My head is burning; and a heat
Is in my skin which angers me.

But hear ye this, ye sons of men!
They that bear rule, and are obeyed,
Unto a rule more strong than theirs
Are in their turn obedient made.

In vain therefore, with wistful eyes
Gazing up hither, the poor man,
Who loiters by the high-heaped booths,
Below there, in the Registàn,

Says, "Happy he, who lodges there;
With silken raiment, store of rice,
And for this drought, all kinds of fruits,
Grape syrup, squares of colored ice,

"With cherries served in drifts of snow."
In vain hath a king power to build

Houses, arcades, enamelled mosques;
And to make orchard closes, filled

With curious fruit-trees, brought from far;
With cisterns for the winter rain;
And in the desert, spacious inns
In divers places;—if that pain

Is not more lightened, which he feels,
If his will be not satisfied:
And that it be not, from all time
The law is planted, to abide.

Thou wert a sinner, thou poor man!
Thou wert athirst; and didst not see
That, though we snatch what we desire,
We must not snatch it eagerly.

And I have meat and drink at will,
And rooms of treasures, not a few.
But I am sick, nor heed I these:
And what I would, I cannot do.

Even the great honor which I have,
When I am dead, will soon grow still.
So have I neither joy nor fame.
But what I can do, that I will.

I have a fretted brickwork tomb
Upon a hill on the right hand,
Hard by a close of apricots,
Upon the road of Samarcand:

Thither, O Vizier, will I bear
This man my pity could not save;
And, plucking up the marble flags,
There lay his body in my grave.

Bring water, nard, and linen rolls;
Wash off all blood, set smooth each limb;
Then say, "He was not wholly vile,
Because a king shall bury him."

Matthew Arnold.

Karaday (Karadagh).

THE FUGITIVE.

A TARTAR SONG, FROM THE PROSE VERSION OF CHODZKO.

I.

"HE is gone to the desert land!
I can see the shining mane
Of his horse on the distant plain,
As he rides with his Cossack band!

"Come back, rebellious one!
Let thy proud heart relent;
Come back to my tall white tent,
Come back, my only son!

"Thy hand in freedom shall
Cast thy hawks, when morning breaks,

On the swans of the Seven Lakes,
On the lakes of Karajal.

"I will give thee leave to stray
And pasture thy hunting steeds
In the long grass and the reeds
Of the meadows of Karaday.

"I will give thee my coat of mail,
Of softest leather made,
With choicest steel inlaid;
Will not all this prevail?"

II.

"This hand no longer shall
Cast my hawks, when morning breaks,
On the swans of the Seven Lakes,
On the lakes of Karajal.

"I will no longer stray
And pasture my hunting steeds
In the long grass and the reeds
Of the meadows of Karaday.

"Though thou give me thy coat of mail,
Of softest leather made,
With choicest steel inlaid,
All this cannot prevail.

"What right hast thou, O Khan,
To me, who am my own,

Who am slave to God alone,
And not to any man?

"God will appoint the day
When I again shall be
By the blue, shallow sea,
Where the steel-bright sturgeons play.

"God, who doth care for me,
In the barren wilderness,
On unknown hills no less
Will my companion be.

"When I wander, lonely and lost
In the wind; when I watch at night
Like a hungry wolf, and am white
And covered with hoar-frost;

"Yea, wheresoever I be,
In the yellow desert sands,
In mountains or unknown lands,
Allah will care for me!"

III.

Then Sobra, the old, old man,—
Three hundred and sixty years
Had he lived in this land of tears,—
Bowed down and said, "O Khan!

"If you bid me, I will speak.
There 's no sap in dry grass,

No marrow in dry bones! alas,
The mind of old men is weak!

"I am old, I am very old:
I have seen the primeval man,
I have seen the great Genghis Khan,
Arrayed in his robes of gold.

"What I say to you is the truth;
And I say to you, O Khan,
Pursue not the star-white man,
Pursue not the beautiful youth.

"Him the Almighty made;
He brought him forth of the light,
At the verge and end of the night,
When men on the mountain prayed.

"He was born at the break of day,
When abroad the angels walk;
He hath listened to their talk,
And he knoweth what they say.

"Gifted with Allah's grace,
Like the moon of Ramazan
When it shines in the skies, O Khan,
Is the light of his beautiful face.

"When first on earth he trod,
The first words that he said

Were these, as he stood and prayed,
There is no God but God!

"And he shall be king of men,
For Allah hath heard his prayer,
And the Archangel in the air,
Gabriel, hath said, Amen!"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Oxus, the River.

THE TARTAR CAMP.

AND the first gray of morning filled the east,
And the fog rose out of the Oxus stream.
But all the Tartar camp along the stream
Was hushed, and still the men were plunged in sleep:
Sohrab alone, he slept not: all night long
He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;
But when the gray dawn stole into his tent,
He rose, and clad himself, and girt his sword,
And took his horseman's cloak, and left his tent,
And went abroad into the cold wet fog,
Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's tent.

Through the black Tartar tents he passed, which stood
Clustering like bee-hives on the low flat strand
Of Oxus, where the summer floods o'erflow
When the sun melts the snows in high Pamere:
Through the black tents he passed, o'er that low strand,
And to a hillock came, a little back

From the stream's brink, the spot where first a boat,
Crossing the stream in summer, scrapes the land.
The men of former times had crowned the top
With a clay fort: but that was fallen; and now
The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent,
A dome of laths, and o'er it felts were spread.

* * *

The sun, by this, had risen, and cleared the fog
From the broad Oxus and the glittering sands:
And from their tents the Tartar horsemen filed
Into the open plain; so Haman bade;
Haman, who next to Peran-Wisa ruled
The host, and still was in his lusty prime.
From the black tents, long files of horse, they streamed:
As when, some gray November morn, the files,
In marching order spread, of long-necked cranes,
Stream over Casbin, and the southern slopes
Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries,
Or some frore Caspian reed-bed, southward bound
For the warm Persian sea-board: so they streamed.
The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's guard,
First, with black sheep-skin caps and with long spears;
Large men, large steeds, who from Bokhara come
And Khiva, and ferment the milk of mares.
Next the more temperate Toorkmuns of the south,
The Tukas, and the lances of Salore,
And those from Attruck and the Caspian sands;
Light men, and on light steeds, who only drink
The acrid milk of camels, and their wells.
And then a swarm of wandering horse, who came
From far, and more doubtful service owned;
The Tartars of Ferghana, from the banks

Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards
And close-set skull-caps; and those wilder hordes
Who roam o'er Kipchak and the northern waste,
Kalmuks and unkemped Kuzzaks, tribes who stray
Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kirghizzes,
Who come on shaggy ponies from Pamere.
These all filed out from camp into the plain.
And on the other side the Persians formed:
First a light cloud of horse, Tartars they seemed,
The Ilyats of Khorassan: and behind,
The royal troops of Persia, horse and foot,
Marshalled battalions bright in burnished steel.

* * *

But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there moved,
Rejoicing, through the hushed Chorasmian waste,
Under the solitary moon: he flowed
Right for the Polar Star, past Orgunjè,
Brimming and bright and large: then sands begin
To hem his watery march, and dam his streams,
And split his currents; that for many a league
The shorn and parcelled Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles —
Oxus forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain cradle in Pamere,
A foiled circuitous wanderer; — till at last
The longed-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.

Matthew Arnold.

AFGHANISTAN.

Cabul (*Cabool*).

CABUL.

OH, who Cabul's sweet region may behold,
When Spring laughs out, or Autumn sows her gold,
The meadows, orchards, streams that glide in light,
Nor deem lost Irem charms again his sight,
That wondrous garden rivalling Eden's bloom,
Too blessed for man to view, this side the tomb?
Flowers here, of every scent and form and dye,
Lift their bright heads, and laugh upon the sky,
From the tall tulip with her rich streaked bell,
Where, throned in state, Queen Mab is proud to dwell,
To lowly wind-flowers gaudier plants eclipse,
And pensile harebells with their dewy lips.
There turns the heliotrope to court the sun,
And up green stalks the starry jasmines run:
The hyacinth in tender pink outvies
Beauty's soft cheek, and violets match her eyes;
Sweet breathe the henna-flowers that harem girls

So love to twine among their glossy curls;
And here the purple pansy springs to birth,
Like some gay insect rising from the earth.
One sheet of bloom the level greensward yields,
And simple daisies speak of England's fields;
Drawn by sweet odor's spell, in humming glee,
Flits round the gloomy stock the robber bee,
While to the gorgeous musk-rose, all night long,
The love-sick bulbul pours his melting song;
Then, too, the fruits through months that hang and glow,
Tempting as those which wrought our mother's woe;
Soft shines the mango on its stem so tall,
Rich gleams beneath the melon's golden ball;
How feasts the eye upon the bell-shaped pear!
Bright cherries look like corals strung in air;
The purple plum, the grape the hand may reach,
Vie with the downy-skinned and blushing peach;
Though small, its place the luscious strawberry claims,
Mid snowy flowers the radiant orange flames;
To quench the thirst the cooling guava see,
And ripe pomegranates melting on the tree.
And here, too, England's favorite fruit is seen,
The red-cheeked apple, veiled by leaves of green;
Ah! at the sight sweet thoughts of home awake,
And foreign lands are welcomed for its sake.

Thrice genial clime! O favored, sweet Cabul!
Well art thou named the blessed, the beautiful!
With snow-peaked hills around thee,—guarding arms!
Ah! would thy sons were worthy of thy charms!

Nicholas Michell.

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